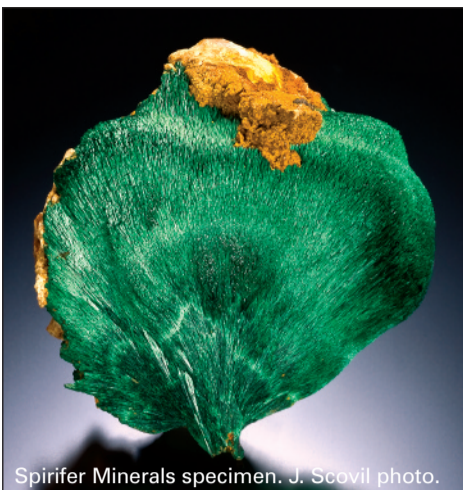


MINERALS

ISSUE #5 THE COLLECTOR'S NEWSPAPER 2012



Spirifer Minerals specimen. J. Scovil photo.

In this issue also:

Collector interview: Gail and Jim Spann (USA)

In our *Collector interview* series we try to show different perspectives and different people. We have already interviewed a professional photographer, a famous collector of huge specimens and the Mindat.org founder. This time we would like to interview some relatively new collectors who are ...

Read on page 15

Journal presentations: Mineral Up

Mineral Up is a magazine about minerals, for mineral collectors and by mineral collectors. We publish articles about everything from micro-mounts to museum pieces, covering European and worldwide topics on mineralogy from the collector's point of view. We consider photography to be very important. We think that a photograph is not merely a decorative complement to an article, it is the article as well.

MINERAL UP is printed in 21x28 cm format, 72 pages, on very high quality 150 g glossy paper, covered by a protective varnish, with plastic cover of 300 g paper ...

Read on page 13



J. Gajowniczek specimen. J. Scovil photo.

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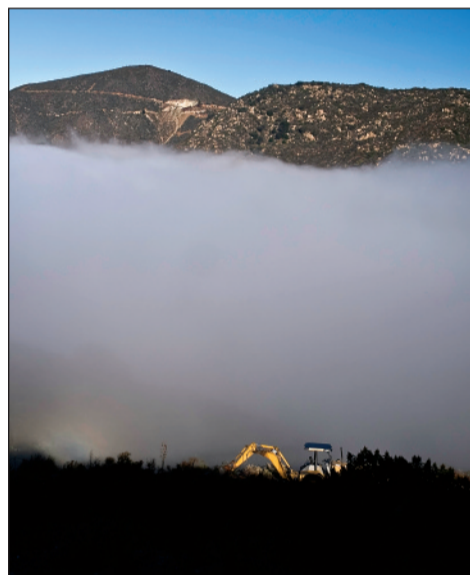
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Tourmaline Queen Mine, California, USA

Tomasz PRASZKIER



Valley fog and the Tourmaline Queen Mine on Queen Mountain, as seen from the Oceanview Mine. M. Mauthner photo.

INTRODUCTION

The Tourmaline Queen Mine is one of the most famous localities among mineral collectors. For over 100 years the mine has produced hundreds of kilograms of gem tourmaline crystals and a huge amount of specimens. Among many pockets the "blue-cap" find made the mine so famous. Some collectors believe it is the most important find ever.

Several authors have written extensive descriptions of history and geology of the mine which were used to compile this text. The most important ones are cited at the end of the article.

LOCALITY

The Tourmaline Queen Mine is located on a slope, close to the summit of



J. Scovil photo.

Elbaite with quartz and albite from the "six-pack" pocket found in 1984 in the Tourmaline Queen Mine, USA. 13.2 cm tall. M. and M. Swoboda specimen.

585 m high Tourmaline Queen or Queen Mountain. It is located 2.7 km to the north of Pala and 72 km NNE from San Diego, in San Diego County, Southern California, USA. The mine is located within the territory of the Pala Indian Reservation.

Continued on next page

"Blue-caps" find 40th anniversary

William F. LARSON

This year is the 40th anniversary of the discovery of the famous "blue-caps" from the Tourmaline Queen Mine in 1972. Below we reprint an account given by one of the discoverers - William Larson. The text was written soon after the discovery and printed the same year in the Lapidary Journal.

Pala Properties International, Inc., became involved in the Pala mining district when Ed Swoboda purchased the Stewart Lithia, Tourmaline Queen and Pala Chief mines. We had been mining the Stewart with mild success since 1968, when we decided that it was time to make the switch up the hill to the Tourmaline Queen. Originally our idea in mining the Stewart was to set up basic operations, learn the gem mining trade, and then move up to the Queen which we

were sure was more promising. However, with the discovery of the famed lost tourmaline adit and initial production of a few fine tourmaline crystals, we overstayed these original plans. But without increased production, economics forced us to make the necessary move up the mountain.

After much talking and planning, Ed arranged for a bulldozer to repair the road, create a working pad and move the compressor. As luck would have it, the bulldozer was delayed one week; and with a lack of anything better to do, John McLean placed a final blast in the Stewart between two adits where a rich zone of lepidolite was exposed. When the fumes cleared, John checked, and lying in the rubble pile was a tourmaline a full

Continued on page 7



Famous specimen of "blue-cap" tourmaline with albite, Tourmaline Queen Mine, USA. 13.2 cm tall. Pinnacle Collection specimen. J. Elliot photo.

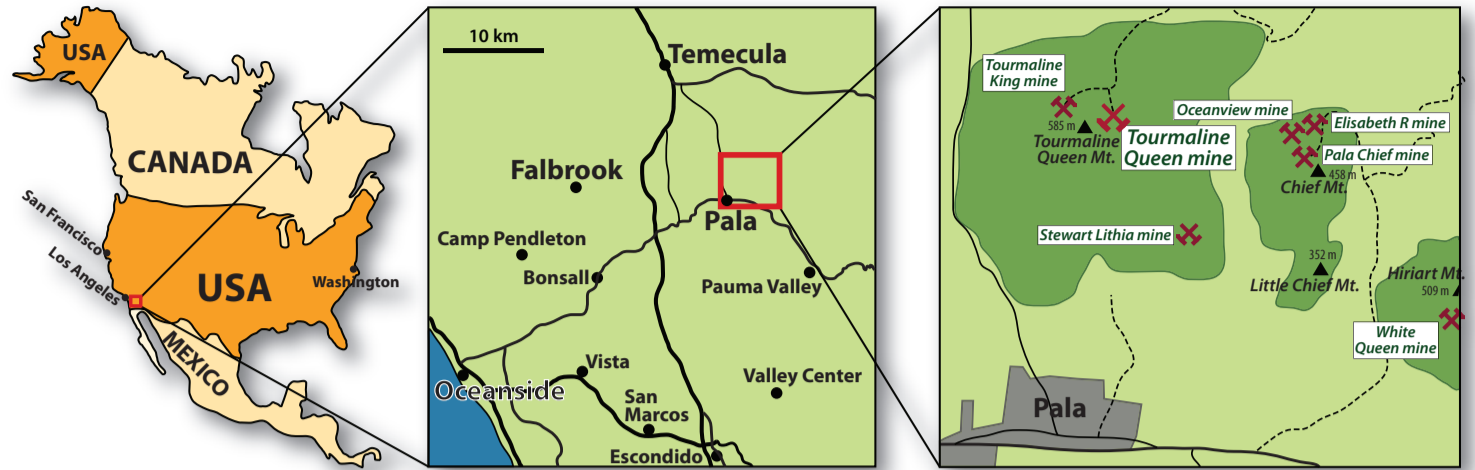
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Continued from page 1

Apart from the Tourmaline Queen Mine there are several other mining operations, both small and large, present on the same mountain. The best known are the Tourmaline King Mine and the Stewart Lithia Mine. Other hills located to the East are famous for other mines such as the Oceanview Mine, the Pala Chief Mine and the White Queen Mine.

GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY

Like the majority of pegmatites in Southern California, the pegmatites occurring in Tourmaline Queen Mountain are formed as veins and tabular bodies intruded into the fractures in granite. Probably they were injected during the



Map of North America showing inserts of the Pala area and the location of the Tourmaline Queen Mine.

Mountain is built mainly of dioritic and gabbroid rocks with numerous pegmatite veins. Several of them are gem-bearing but the pegmatite accessed by

Beryl was found in many pockets forming gem crystals. Usually their color varied from almost colorless, through orangeish to pink, while the size ranged from a few to almost 10 cm (exceptionally). Crystals were formed in tabular form with the dominant basal pinacoid face and very short prism typical for morganite. The majority of them also featured well developed pyramid faces truncating the pinacoid. Often the pinacoid faces were lustrous and glossy, while the other faces were frosted due to preferential etching. Some of the crystals were highly etched. The combinations of colorful tourmalines with pink beryl crystals are especially appreciated by the collectors as they are extremely uncommon in other localities. In the Tourmaline Queen Mine they were collected only from a few finds.

Feldspars, albite and microcline appear in the majority of the pockets. White to grey and yellowish cleavelandite (var.

of albite) forming spheroidal aggregates was particularly frequent and often co-occurred with tourmalines and beryls. It gave a great contrast to the colorful tourmalines including some of the "blue-caps".

Mica was represented mostly by lepidolite but muscovite was also noted. Usually micas occurred as small crystals but some exceptions are known - crystals even 7 cm long have been reported. Lepidolite together with other minerals formed the matrix for the gem crystals in some pockets.

Quartz was very common in the pockets and was frequently well formed. Usually it was colorless, milky or light citrine. The size of some crystals associated with tourmalines reached over 20 cm. The majority of the most famous specimens from the mine are a combination of quartz crystals and tourmalines.



Over 100 year old chinese carved snuff bottle, 8.5 cm tall. Carved from a single crystal from the Tourmaline Queen Mine. W. Larson collection. Mark Mauthner photo.

Lower Upper Cretaceous into the batholith built by numerous plutons of different chemistry. The age of the plutons was determined to be 143-101 Ma, which is during the Lower Cretaceous. Pegmatites occurring in the area are of the LCT type and are enriched in boron, which manifests in the presence of numerous tourmalines. Tourmaline Queen

the Tourmaline Queen Mine is definitely the most important one. It is at least 1000 meters long, and usually around 10 meters thick. The average dip is about 30 degrees and the strike N-S.

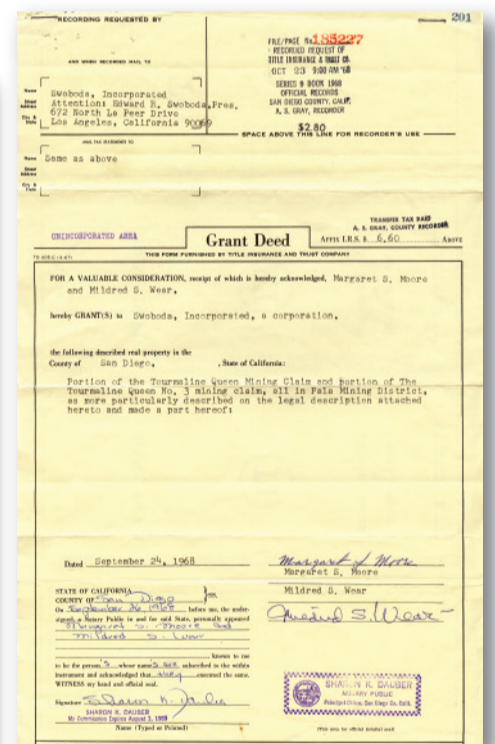
In the mine, pockets occur irregularly in the pegmatite, and are grouped close to each other in some areas. In other parts of the pegmatite body there is a complete, or almost complete, lack of them. Concentrations of lepidolite, larger sized crystals and finally the clay filling the pockets are the indicators of cavities, which vary in size from a few centimeters to over 3 m. Serious mineralogical research has never been conducted for the Tourmaline Queen Mine, therefore little is known about the micro-minerals. From the collector's point of view only a few of the mineral species are important. They are briefly described below.



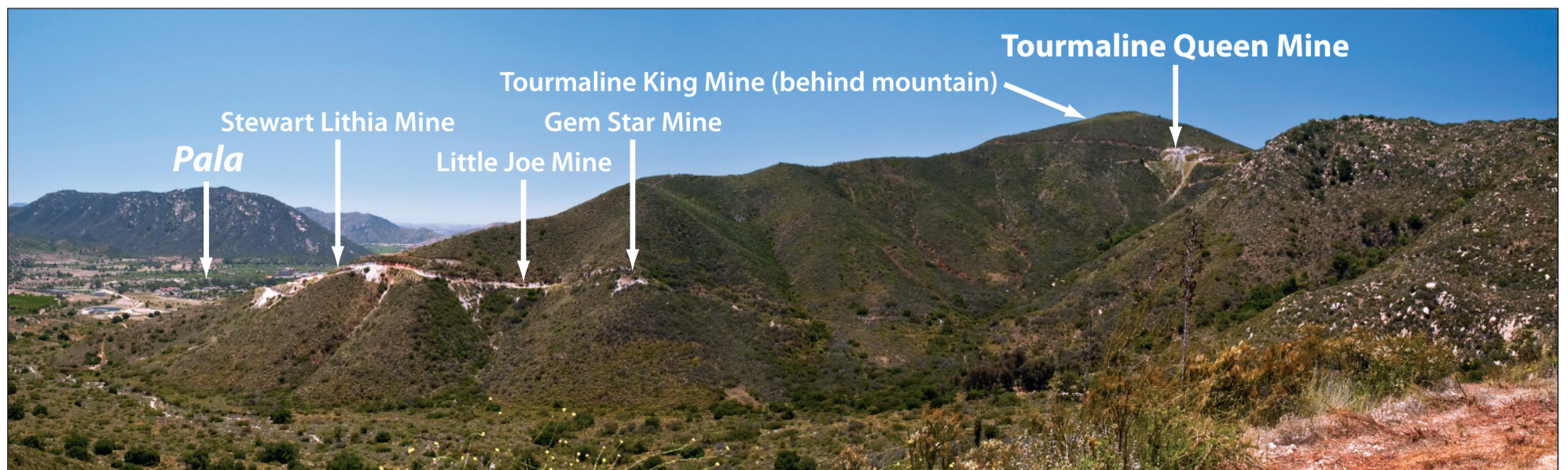
Tourmaline Queen Mountain in the early 1900's. Photo courtesy Pala International.



Notice of claiming Tourmaline Queen Mine by the discoverers in 1903. Courtesy E. Swoboda.



Grant Deed showing sale of the Tourmaline Queen Mine to Edward Swoboda in 1968. Courtesy E. Swoboda.



View of Pala Mountain and the town of Pala, marked the most important mines in the area. M. Mauthner photo.



Mine portal in 1972. J. Scripps photo.



Resting at the front of the mine in 1972. J. Scripps photo.



Mine puppy Chamuko, around 1972. J. Scripps photo.

Tourmaline was the main goal of mining in the beginning of the 20th century and later, during the collectors' specimen-focused operations. It was also the species that made the mine famous. Analytic works showed that tourmalines from the Tourmaline Queen Mine are elbaïtes. They form prismatic crystals, more or less elongated, with the trigonal prism and pedion typical for the species. More complex terminations occurred on some of the smaller specimens. The pedion face was frequently matte, but in some cases, like in the "blue-cap" pocket, it was mirror lustrous. Prism faces were always heavily striated. Split growth was frequently present on the larger crystals. It was manifested by the growth of smaller individuals that were almost par-

crystals were a few cm long. The most unique characteristic for the mine was the hot pink to almost red rubelite color. It was often associated with all the shades of blue, from grayish to deep blue. The core of the crystals was usually pink, while the last phase of growth was blue. Probably Mn enrichment was responsible for the pink color and Fe for the blue one. Pure indicolite crystals are also known. Multiple color crystals were also found in some pockets. In such cases the color changed from green and purple to pink and blue within the same crystal.

MINING HISTORY AND MOST IMPORTANT POCKETS AND SPECIMENS

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th was the period of quickly growing gem research and mining industry in Southern California. Intense pink rubelites, which were sent to China for carving as gemstones and later sold to several US companies including Tiffany & Company, were especially valuable at that time.

In 1903 Frank Salmons (a store owner in Pala) and C.W. Ernesting (jeweler), initiated a partnership for mining and selling gemstones. Their main goal was to find a new source of tourmalines to supply the growing demand. At the same time Salmons, together with John Giddens, hired two Basque sheep herders to carry out the research in the nearby mountains. They quickly found the gem tourmalines and pegmatite vein near the top of the hill today known as Tourmaline Queen Mountain. In a short time they collected quite a lot of gem material. When they came back the four of them decided to claim the area together. They did so on November 6, 1903 naming the claim the Tourmaline Queen.

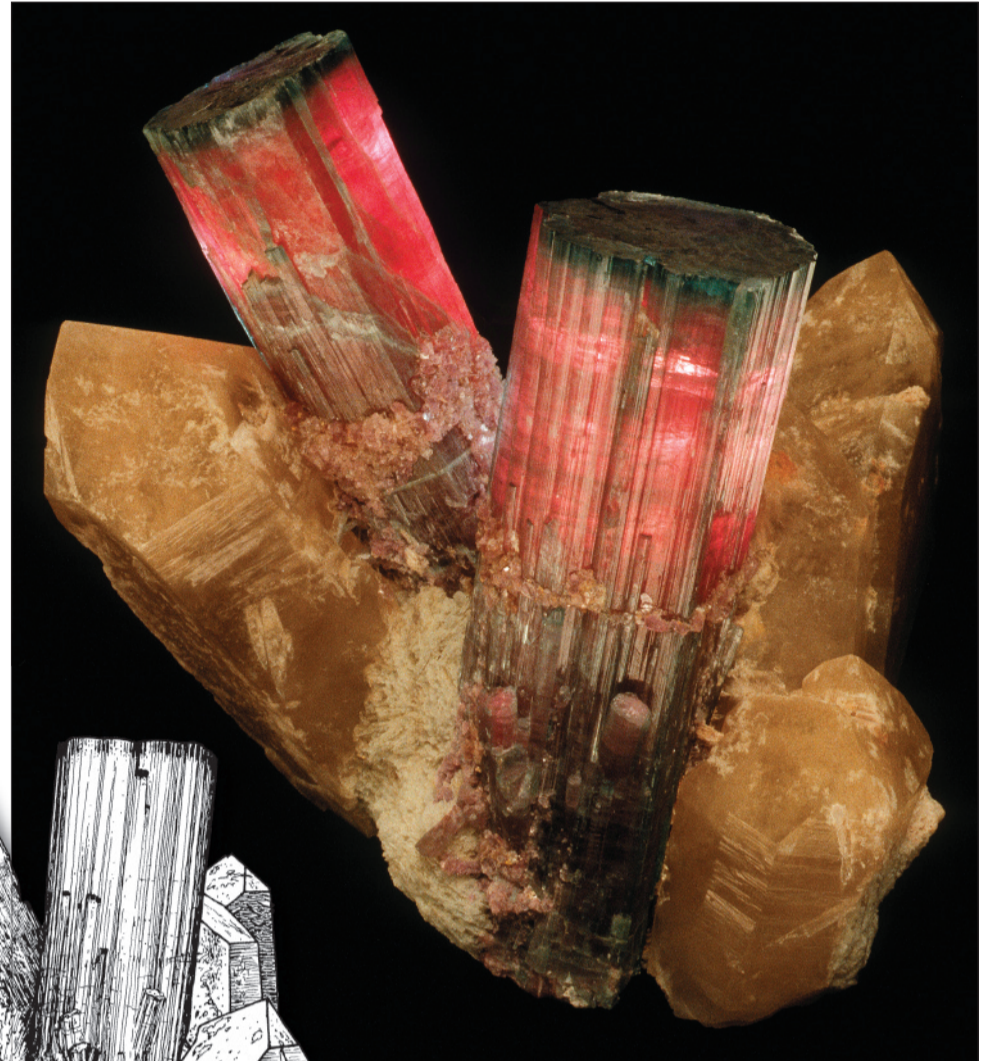
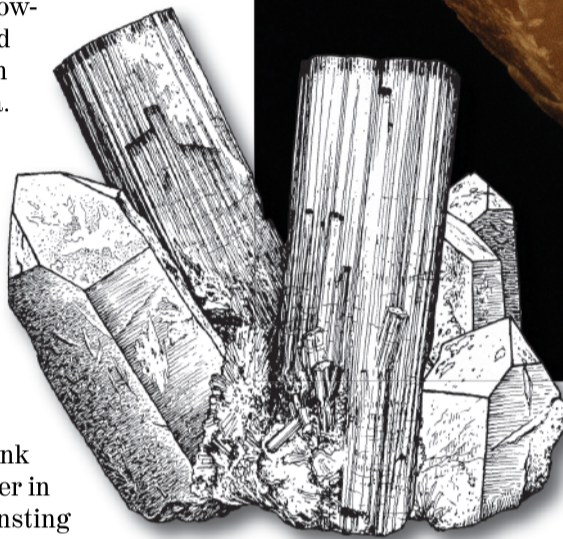


Photo and drawing of the big, 22.6 cm tall, specimen of tourmaline with quartz. Specimen was recently trimmed, see lower right photo on the page 5. S. Rudolph specimen. Photo by J. Scovil, drawing by W. Wilson.



Pen and ink drawing of "The Postage Stamp Tourmaline" specimen by W. Wilson.

ters deep and 20 meters long, and that about 35 kg of gem tourmalines had been recovered. He reported yellow, green, pink and ruby red crystals.

Shortly thereafter, the Tourmaline Queen Mine became one of the biggest producers of gem tourmalines in Southern California (along with the Himalaya Mine). The most productive period was between 1904 and 1914. During this period extended surficial and underground mining was done and an underground tunnel almost 300 meters long was driven. It remains unknown how much tourmaline was produced in that period, but we know that the sale of tourmaline was about \$50,000 only in one year – 1913. There were numerous pockets with gem crystals found in 1904-1914 and hundreds, if not over a thousand, kilograms of gem tourmaline were mined. Almost all the material was cut and carved, hence almost no specimens from that period have survived. What is interesting is that the carvings made in China from the California material are now very highly sought by US collectors as pieces of the history of the Tourmaline Queen Mine. One of very few specimens that survived from the mentioned period was collected in 1913. It is the so called "Postage Stamp Tourmaline" which consists of a 7 cm long single tourmaline and two quartzes. It was pictured on the 10 cent American postage stamp printed in 1974 in the Mineral Heritage series.

The revolution in China that took place at the turn of 1911/1912 was important to the history of the mine, which might seem surprising. The Emperor of China abdicated and the socialists came to power. The aristocracy was in retreat and the Chinese market for luxury carved gemstones rapidly collapsed. Almost at the same time (1913) the local gemstone market in the USA collapsed, resulting in the closing of the majority of the mines in Southern California, includ-

ing the Tourmaline Queen Mine, in 1914.

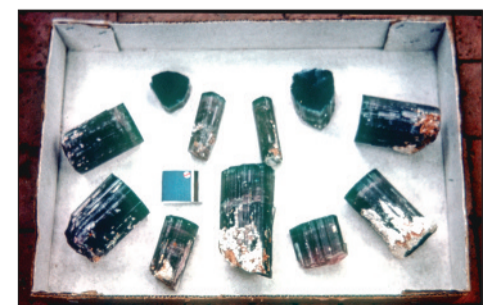
There were 55 years of almost no activity in the Tourmaline Queen Mine from 1914 to 1969. During this period some minor research and mining was done but without great luck. In 1955 president Dwight D. Eisenhower granted the mine patent to Margaret Moore and Mildred Wear – daughters of Frank Salmons. In the '50s and '60s many high-



Bob Bartsch collecting in the mine in 1972. R. Currier photo.



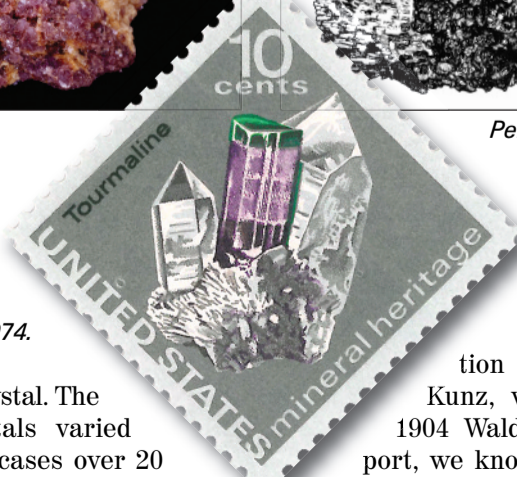
Tourmaline crystals in situ in the pocket clay. J. Scripps photo.



Flat with freshly mined "blue-cap" tourmaline crystals. J. Scripps photo.



Specimen known as "The Postage Stamp Tourmaline" found in 1913. 12.7 cm tall. HMNH coll. W. Wilson photo. 10 cents postage stamp from 1974.



allel to the main crystal. The size of the crystals varied reaching in some cases over 20 cm for gem crystals! Most of the

From the description given by George Kunz, who relied on the 1904 Waldemar Schaller report, we know that at the time there was already an open cut, 3 me-



Fluorapatite, 2.6 cm wide. W. Larson collection. M. Mauthner photo.

graders visited the mine trying to locate some of the pockets. They did a lot of damage digging in the security pillars, dumping waste material inside the mine etc. Because of that the mine was in bad shape and needed serious work to become productive again.



Tourmaline with quartz found in 1972, 4.5 cm high. C. Graeber collection. J. Fisher photo.



Freshly collected tourmaline specimens, around 1972. J. Scripps photo.



Tourmaline found in 1973, 6.5 cm high. J. Fisher and J. Kureczka collection. J. Fisher photo.

On September 25, 1968 Edward Swoboda purchased the 30 acre patented Tourmaline Queen mining property from M. Moore and M. Wear. The next year he leased the property to Pala Properties International which was established by himself and William Larson. A detailed history of the activity and discovery of one of the world most famous tourmaline pockets is given in William Larson's account written and published at the end of 1972 and is reprinted in this issue (see at page 7).

The "blue-cap" pocket was opened on January 19, 1972 among a series of other pockets. It was 3.5 meter long, 1.2 m wide and 60 cm high in the highest place. The majority of the tourmalines with quartz grew downward from the ceiling of the pocket. In a few days it produced many specimens, including around 34 major ones. Several of them are now considered to be world-class mineral icons. All are characterized by deep pink color of the main part of the tourmaline crystal, an intense blue top part, high luster, flat termination and big size. Descriptions of the best of the specimens given below should be a good illustration of the quality of the specimens.

The huge specimen known as "Candelabra" is probably the best known tourmaline from the "blue-cap" find. It is exhibited in the Smithsonian Institution and illustrated here on page 11. It consists of a 30x23 cm matrix with three 14 cm long tourmalines sticking up from it. The Candelabra needed some repairs but even with them it is one of the best known specimens in the world.



Tourmaline crystal, 4.4 cm tall. G. Meieran specimen. J. Scovil photo.

A specimen called "Rabbit Ears" is nearly as famous. It is exhibited in the Houston Museum of Natural Science and is illustrated here on page 11. This specimen contains 2 main quartz crystals from which two tourmaline "ears" are sticking up. Altogether it is 24 cm high. It needed some repairs and some of the quartz is damaged, but its aesthetic, color and size make it an iconic specimen overall. Value appraised by the museum for that piece is \$15,000,000!

Another famous big specimen is now in the Canadian Museum of Nature collection and is shown here on page 10. This specimen is 26 cm high and has two 13 cm long tourmaline crystals standing on a group of doubly terminated quartz.

One of the most aesthetic specimens containing a single, huge "blue-cap" on a single quartz crystal belongs to Carl Larson. The specimen is 18 cm high, repaired but with very dramatic aesthetics, shown here on page 9.

Another famous specimen, owned by William H. Larson, is a cluster of two "blue-caps" with morganite between them, making a superb mineralogical



Tourmaline crystal, 10.6 cm tall. G. Meieran specimen. J. Scovil photo.

and coloristic composition, illustrated here on page 12. The specimen is 15 cm high, and also has some repairs.

A 26 cm wide specimen of quartz with big "blue-cap" tourmaline group is owned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History; illustrated here on page 12.

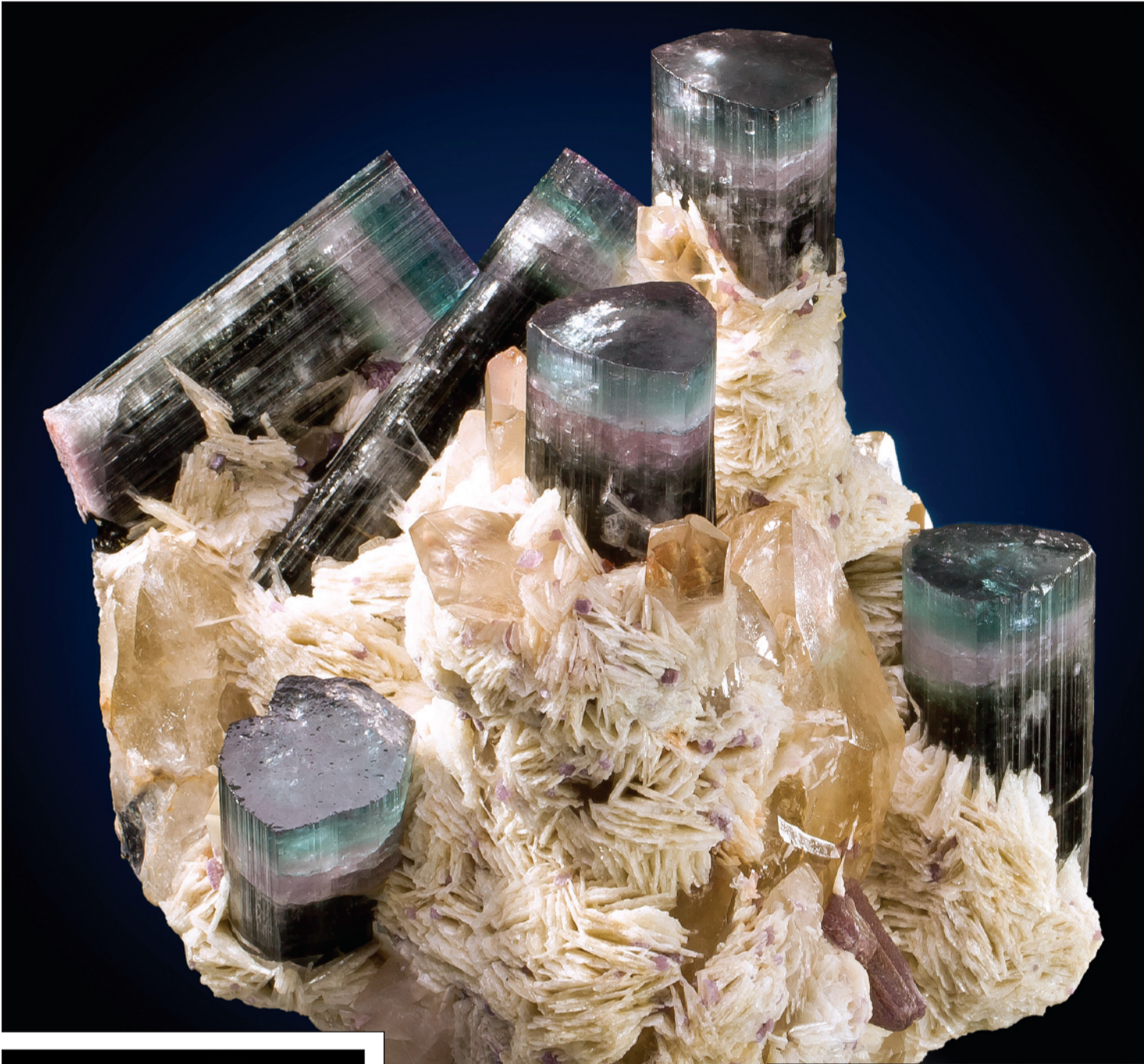
One of the few big and aesthetic specimens was kept hidden for many years and introduced by Edward Swoboda to the public for the first time only in 2012. This specimen is over 28 cm long and is built of big quartz crystals and two "blue-caps" sticking up from them; illustrated here on page 8. Rumor has it that this piece was purchased by Marion Stuart, an extremely wealthy collector at that time, during a mine party, to be donated to the LA museum. After purchasing it, she decided to keep the specimen in her collection rather than donating it. She selected this specimen as the most



Pocket found in 1974 photographed in situ, note big morganite crystal along with tourmalines. W. Larson photo.



Beryl var. morganite crystal, 6 cm wide. W. Larson collection. M. Mauthner photo.



Tourmaline found in 1973, 6.5 cm tall. C. Graeber collection. J. Fisher photo.

Finally in July 1974 the so called "Barlow Pocket" was hit. It was named after John Barlow who was in the mine at the time and helped to extract the specimens. He bought most of them, including the huge "Barlow Buster" with tourmalines and morganites. Later, together with Peter Bancroft, they restored the pocket as it looked *in situ* in the mine.

Finally in 1978 after mining hundreds of meters of tunnel, Pala Properties International decided to close the mine. It is estimated that during the years of its activity the company sold specimens and gemstones worth over \$1 million.

From the end of '70s to the mid-'90s the mine was leased from time to time for short periods and small-scale operations were done. The only important pocket found in this period was the so-called "Six-Pack Pocket" named after the 20 cm long specimen of feldspar and quartz with 6 multicolor (blue, purple, pink and green) zoned tourmaline crystals.



Beryl var. morganite crystal found in 1972, 5 cm wide. W. Larson collection. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.

Large specimen known as "six-pack" found in 1984 in six-pack pocket, 19.5 cm tall. Arkenstone specimen, now on display in the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas. J. Budd photo.

aesthetic of the big ones, having only one repair and bought it still dirty. What is interesting is that she had never cleaned it in her life! The specimen remained hidden and only one polaroid photo of it was known. In the '90s the specimen was sold to James Horner still in a "big secret" and finally washed and trimmed. Today it is owned by the Arkenstone company.

One of the few matrix specimens that is not repaired is the 14 cm single crystal with a group of albite as a matrix. This specimen, pictured here on the cover, was also on the cover of the fa-

mous "Ikons" book. It shows an amazing coloristic contrast and general aesthetics. It is now owned by Pinnacle Collection.

"The Belly Button" is a smaller but also very famous specimen and belongs to Peter Via. It is a single 13 cm high "blue-cap" tourmaline crystal with a big gemmy morganite crystal placed in the middle of it looking like a button. It is illustrated here on page 10. Its aesthetics and the paragenesis make this specimen really unique.

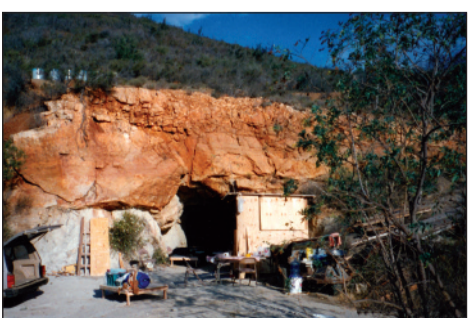
A 12 cm high group of four "blue-cap" crystals with quartz on the base is owned by Azurite Corporation and illustrated here on page 7.

Another very distinctive specimen called "The Beer Cans" resembling two beer cans laying one on another, is 14 cm high and, as the name suggests, contains beer can size tourmalines. It is illustrated here on page 12.

After the "blue-cap" bonanza, Pala Properties International continued mining in the same area hoping to find more tourmalines. They drove many meters of tunnels but had not found any important pockets.



Huge tourmaline with quartz, trimmed from specimen shown on page 3. 20 cm tall. S. Rudolph specimen. J. Scovil photo.



Mine portal in mid 90's with new cook shack on the right. E. Swoboda photo.



10 cm tall tourmaline on quartz collected as one of the last specimens before mine closed in 2001. Swoboda specimen.



For the first time since 1972 a big group of the "blue-cap" tourmalines "met" together in 2008 at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show at the American Mineral Treasures Exhibition. W. Wilson photo.



Close-up of the six-pack specimen shown on page 5. J. Budd photo.

tals on top (see photo on page 5). A second major specimen from that find contains two colorful tourmalines on quartz crystals – it is altogether 13 cm tall (see photo on the cover). The pocket was kept a secret until 2012 and still remains a mystery but probably it did not produce many high quality specimens apart from the two described above.

In 1993 the mine was leased to Roland Reed who did not have much luck and after drifting tens of meters of tun-

nels found only a few small pockets with rubellites. He gave up in 1996.

In 1996 Edward Swoboda decided to give the mine another chance. He rebuilt the entrance to the mine, created a cook shack with a covered eating area and arranged a "bedroom" along the old tunnel providing fresh air and guaranteeing a nice temperature all year long. The miners also placed a statue of Saint Guadalupe surrounded by candles in a small alcove in the weathered granite. The mining started again.

In 1997 the mine was explored by Canadian geologists with geo-radar in search of anomalies. They identified six anomalies in 2 days. After examining them it turned out that they were only mud filled cracks and vein disturbances - no pockets were found.

Swoboda was a close friend of the famous gemmologist Richard Liddicoat (after whom liddicoatite was named) for over 40 years. At the end of the '90s they formed a hand-shake agreement to work the mine pushing a tunnel to reach an enriched zone that Edward believed existed and had never been touched. For a little less than two years they worked on reaching this area but eventually stopped the operation as it was getting expensive and there was nothing to show for the work.

In July 2001 Swoboda, together with San Diego Mining Company, decided to work some surficial parts of the pegmatite. During this time the vein was exposed on quite a long distance. In the weathered pegmatite there were still solid boulders which needed to be removed. Old tunnels mined back in the early 1900s were uncovered. A pocket from which several cats-eye indicolites were recovered was discovered very close to one of the tunnels. To continue the research 1 to 2 tons of heavy boulders had to be removed. Behind one of the boulders a small pocket with 4 cm long deep blue tourmalines was found. Soon another pocket was discovered producing two superb specimens. They are

both very similar - about 20 cm long matrix of quartz, lepidolite and cleavelandite with morganite crystal and multi-color tourmalines with pink, green and blue zones. All these pockets were found in the small area of the old supporting pillar. A short time after the careful extraction of the content of all pockets and cleaning the area the mine was again closed and remains closed to this day (2012).

The mine has not been active in recent years for several reasons, one of the problems being the legal issues with Pala Indian Reservation on the territory of which the Tourmaline Queen Mine is located.

The mine is not active but its fame is still alive. In 2006 Bryan Swoboda, son of Edward, established a company called "BlueCap Productions". It produces DVDs about minerals and collecting. The history symbolically closed in 2012 when Bryan produced a DVD with his father's presentation about his gemstone and mineral-dedicated life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article would have never been written if not for the huge help and a lot of information and materials from Edward and Bryan Swoboda and William



BlueCap Productions is a company that specializes in producing mineral-related films. It was started by Bryan Swoboda, Edward's son, and the logo is a stylized representation of "The Rabbit Ears" specimen (page 11) - Ed's favorite blue cap.

Larson. I would like to give my special thanks to Robert Lavinsky, Wendell Wilson, Scott Richie and Mark Mauthner. I would also like to thank other people who helped me with this article in different ways: Jamie Newman, Daniel Trin-chillo, Jesse Fisher, Mia Dixon, James Elliott, Robert Simonoff and Paul Cra-gan.

To those who would like to read more about the Tourmaline Queen Mine I recommend the California Pegmatites issue of the Mineralogical Record, 2002, 33/5 and literature cited there. More information can also be found at mindat.org: <http://www.mindat.org/loc-3564.html>

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Spirifer Minerals, Warszawa, Poland
e-mail: tom@spiriferminerals.com



Edward Swoboda (right) and his son Bryan with "The Rabbit Ears" - one of the most famous specimens from the "blue-cap" pocket. Mae L. Swoboda photo.



Recent photo of the Edward Swoboda at the site of the "blue-cap" pocket, owner of the Tourmaline Queen Mine from 1968. B. Swoboda photo.

SUNDAYS AT THE WESTWARD LOOK

Ed Swoboda - American mineral collector and first recipient of the Mineralogical Record's newly-created award, The American Mineral Heritage Award created to recognize lifetime achievements in field collecting. From collecting Benitoite in the 30s to being the first to begin mining Brazilianite in the 40s to finding the Tourmaline blue cap pocket in the 70s and so much more. Ed Swoboda's career has spanned both decades and continents. Now, for the first time, Swoboda tells stories of his world-wide adventures and shares images from his private photo collection. Hear the collecting stories only one man can tell in the highest attended Sunday Evening Program the Westward Look Mineral Show has ever hosted. It's history in the making.

ED SWOBODA - A LIFE OF GEMS AND MINERALS

Ed Swoboda
A LIFE OF GEMS AND MINERALS

DVD VIDEO

Ed Swoboda - American mineral collector and first recipient of the Mineralogical Record's newly created award - The American Mineral Heritage Award created to recognize lifetime achievements in field collecting. From collecting Benitoite in the 30s to being the first to begin mining Brazilianite in the 40s to finding the Tourmaline blue cap pocket in the 70s and so much more. Ed Swoboda's career has spanned both decades and continents. Now, for the first time, Swoboda tells stories of his world-wide adventures and shares images from his private photo collection. Hear the collecting stories only one man can tell in the highest attended Sunday Evening Program the Westward Look Mineral Show has ever hosted. It's history in the making.

www.bluecapproductions.com

"Blue-caps" 40th anniversary Tourmaline Queen Mine, USA

William F. LARSON



John McLean chief miner of the Tourmaline Queen Mine holding freshly mined "blue-cap" tourmalines from famous find in 1972. J. Scripps photo.

Continued from page 1

10x4 inches looking at him. In disbelief he muttered thanks to the mine spirits and took it out to show Jose who, seeing the red, started jumping wildly and celebrating. No one who saw this large crystal could believe it. After 3 1/2 years, it was a crowning glory. The crystal remains the largest and finest tourmaline produced from the Stewart Mine.

Later the bulldozer arrived, the road was improved, a small pad carved

out and the compressor placed. All was now ready for operations to begin. The old adits were in terrible shape, as the working face had sluffed in during heavy rains a few years before. We decided to "poor-boy" the operation until we hit some limited evidence of future success. John and Jose dug a trench with pick and shovel until one of the old adits was intersected. The trench was enlarged until ventilation was possible. After several hours, we went below to check out the workings. The upper adits had suffered most from the heavy rains. They had filled up with silt, making it impossible to traverse them without crawling on one's hands and knees; however, they had not caved in. Water had completely filled the lower workings, leaving the walls slightly covered with mud. We were able to locate one route to the surface through which temporary airlines could be brought with minimal effort.

The next problem was where to begin our exploratory work. With the walls coated, chipping was necessary to expose the mineralogy of the pegmatite. A suitable area was found where a pocket had been removed in past operations. The back face of this adit showed evidence of slight enrichment such as large feldspar crystals, minor schorl tourmalines and large grains of lepidolite. Some of the schorls in the ceiling showed exteriors of pink and green tourmaline indicating the possibility that good colored crystals had been found in the past. All equipment was set up on a temporary basis so we could drill and blast in several areas to see if we wanted to go into the great expense of setting up a more or less permanent operation. Our

equipment would be minimal: a compressor, jack leg, drill, rubber hose and electric generator. We would not worry about mucking during the sniping operations, as there were several blank tunnels we could backfill. We needed a small strike to strengthen our convictions that this mine would be more productive.

John McLean began drilling and blasting by September 1971. He was really roughing it. Water was placed in the drill holes manually to keep dust down;



Edward Swoboda holding freshly mined "blue-cap" tourmaline. W. Larson photo.

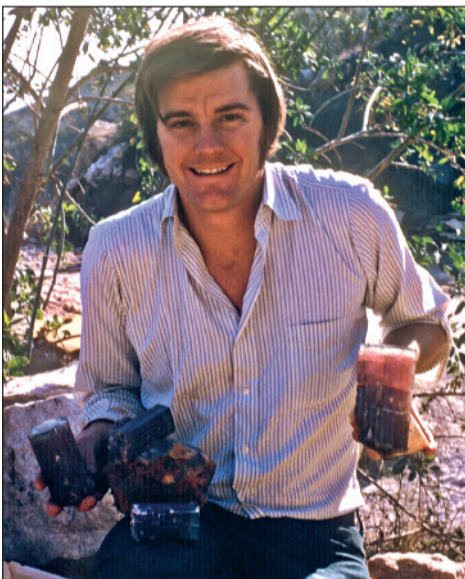
and after a blast, the material was back-filled into the nearest adit, which had been deemed unnecessary. After two weeks of backbreaking work of this sort, 20 feet of new tunnel had been carved out down-dip. Buzz Gray and I were up in Seattle at the National Gem and Mineral Show when I got a call from my wife, Karla, that a large pocket of dark blue tourmaline had been hit. Buzz and I were overjoyed at the prospect that this mine would indeed be productive.

As soon as we returned, I examined what remained of the pocket. It had been about 2x2x1 feet, quite a nice size and contained a sticky red clay. Four fine



Doubly terminated pair of "blue-cap" tourmalines, 6.1 cm tall. W. Larson collection. M. Mauthner photo.

tourmalines had been found, one single crystal doubly terminated 3x2 inches. The three matrixes were all similar; each had a single crystal 3x2 inches attached to a quartz crystal. Many quartz crystals were found, all with distinctive montmorillonite inclusions giving them a white to pink opaque exterior. The most exciting aspect was that the tourmalines, while dark blue on the exterior, were deep rubellite on the interior, almost too



Young William Larson holding freshly mined tourmalines. J. Scripps photo.



Edward Swoboda in 70's examining his favourite "blue-cap" tourmaline - "The Rabbit Ears".

much to hope for since most of the recent pockets that had been documented lacked rubellite.

The mine had passed its test. We now had to back off and go about mining seriously. This would be expensive and time consuming but, hopefully, worth the effort. The pads were made permanent, concrete replaced dirt; the dangerous face which had sluffed in during the rains was blasted back resealing our crawl hole. For over a month, pick, shovel and wheelbarrow worked to re-open the main adit. A winch had to be installed to bring the wheelbarrow up the adit as it followed the 12 to 15 degree dip of the pegmatite. Our operations were basic; hand operations cleared all the muck, pick, shovel and wheelbarrow over and over again, each blast making many more hours of the same grind.



Scan of the unique photo made on polaroid showing Peter Bancroft collecting in the "blue-cap" pocket in 1972. E. Swoboda photo.



Bucket with mud and fragments of the crystals from the "blue-cap" pocket. W. Larson photo.



Polaroid photo of the big quartz and elbaite specimen still dirty. This specimen was hidden and almost unknown until 2012. See recent photo on the right.

Little by little the adit was cleared to the area where the indicolite pocket was found. After two months, we could walk standing up the 180 foot downdip instead of crawling.

The pegmatite continued to show signs of increasing richness. The size of the lepidolite crystals had increased two or three times. Much cleavelandite feldspar was still present along with subhedral and euhedral quartz and perthite feldspar. The next six feet or so was unproductive; however, all the pocket indications continued, and we were again rewarded with a pocket. This time it was a small vug series, a group of interconnected vugs from fist size to football size. They were quite devoid of gem minerals being mostly filled with a red clay on top and a sandy clay on the bottom. When tourmaline was encountered, it was usually present in 1-inch crystals clustered near the bottom. Tourmaline crystals were found up to 2 inches in diameter in



Spectacular 28.5 cm wide specimen of quartz with "blue-caps" after trimming and cleaning, compare with photo on the left. Arkenstone specimen, now on display in the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas. J. Budd photo.

one vug; however, even the most careful removal yielded only crystal fragments. They had grown into the walls having only contact terminations at best. The most exciting aspect of these larger tourmalines was their color, rubellite without any indicolite at all. We were all much more excited by these poor specimens than anything up to that point. We figured the indicolite watermelon tourmaline was as close to red as we could hope for.

We carefully removed all the vug contents into our powder boxes to take home and wash. Washing is a crude

process of placing all the carefully removed pocket contents into tubs of water to soak. When the clay has absorbed water, it is more easily removed. The sticky mass is placed on a large screen supported between two sawhorses. A garden hose is used to spray the clay while a scrub brush is used to break down the larger clay masses. As this is being done, the different minerals become recognizable. After a few minutes, the screen contents are bright and clean; everyone gathers round it to pick out all the crystals. Screening the contents of these vugs didn't produce any large crystals but many more 1 inch crystals did show up, and more interesting were the several morganite thumbnails that were found.

Work was continued downdip past the vug area. The first chance I had to examine the new workings, John had just encountered what appeared to be a fault plane crosscutting our tunnel. The rock looked barren on both sides of the structure and barren all the way from the vuggy area. John had already gone this far so he wanted to try a little to the right and down. It seemed a little softer to him there. The next shot uncovered lepidolite, at least a little more promising. One week and two more shots later he hit a small pocket. It contained one specimen, a quartz crystal about 5x4 inches with a rubellite tourmaline flaring out of the center, 2 inches in diameter. The tourmaline was recovered in three pieces, but careful repair would make it into a fine specimen. These tourmalines are broken by nature in the pockets through final phase explosive pocket formation, earth movements and general decompositions, especially a small pocket like this, where the tourmaline, when perfect, filled the entire pocket from side to side.



The largest known single "blue-cap" tourmaline, never before seen by the public and hidden for 40 years, as photographed in the Arkenstone inventory before trading to Gene Meieran, in whose collection it now resides.

The discovery of a rubellite specimen of major consequence really turned us all on. I was in contact with the mining operations daily. Ed would call or come down from Los Angeles as often as possible as we were now sure something major was shaping up.

I was working in the shop with a fine jewelry designer from Bar Harbor, Maine, Mr. Rocky Willis, when John came down from the mine to tell us he had hit a new pocket. "I can't tell how big it is, but there is one tourmaline exposed measuring 2x2 inches." This was enough for all of us. Entering the mine, we found the new workings had now taken a 10-foot jog to the right, starting where John had originally found the softer material. The pocket was exposed at the back of this new short adit near the center about two feet above the floor. It was elliptical about one-and-one-half



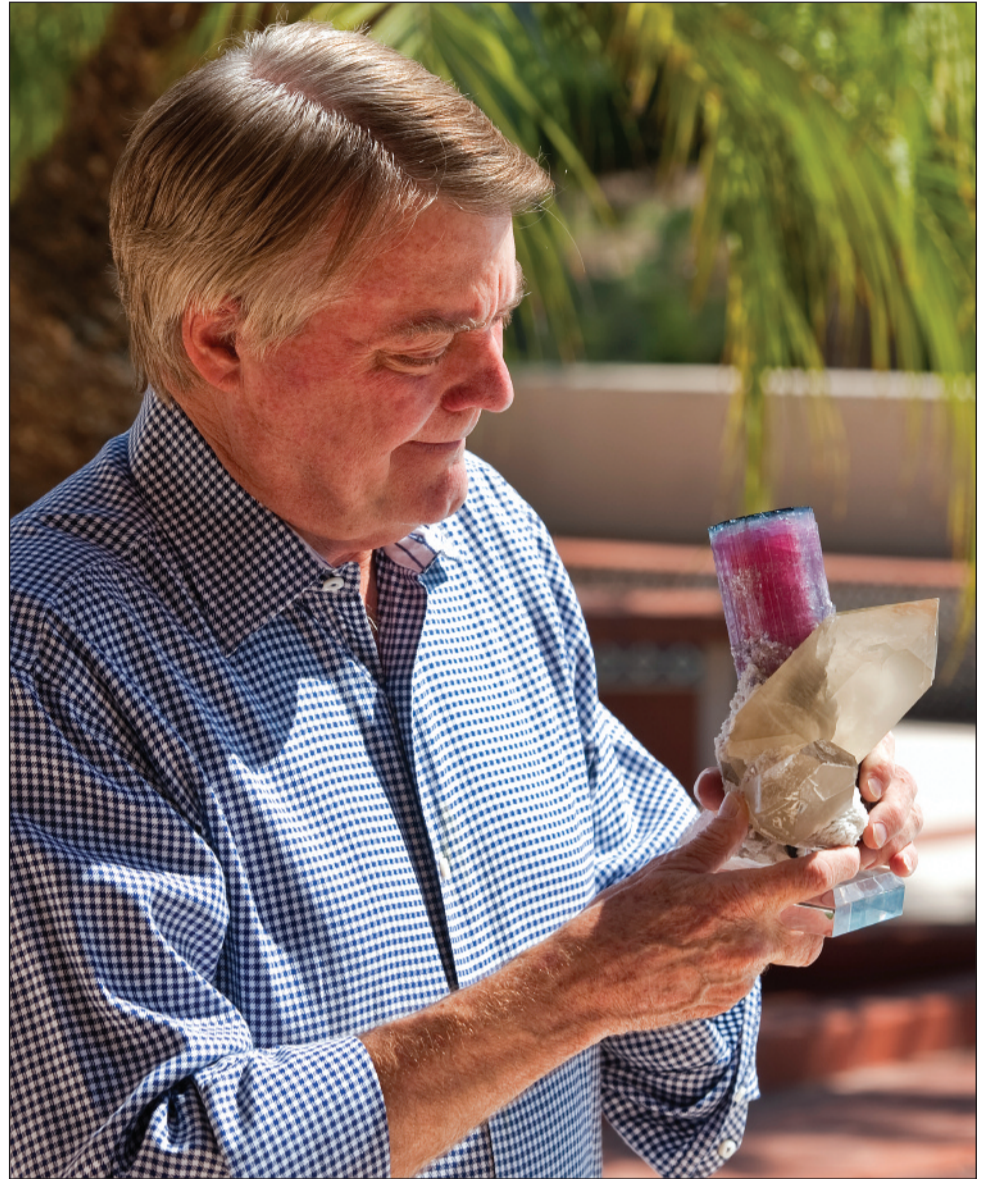
"Blue-cap" tourmaline crystal, 12.2 cm tall. Arkenstone specimen. Scovil photo.



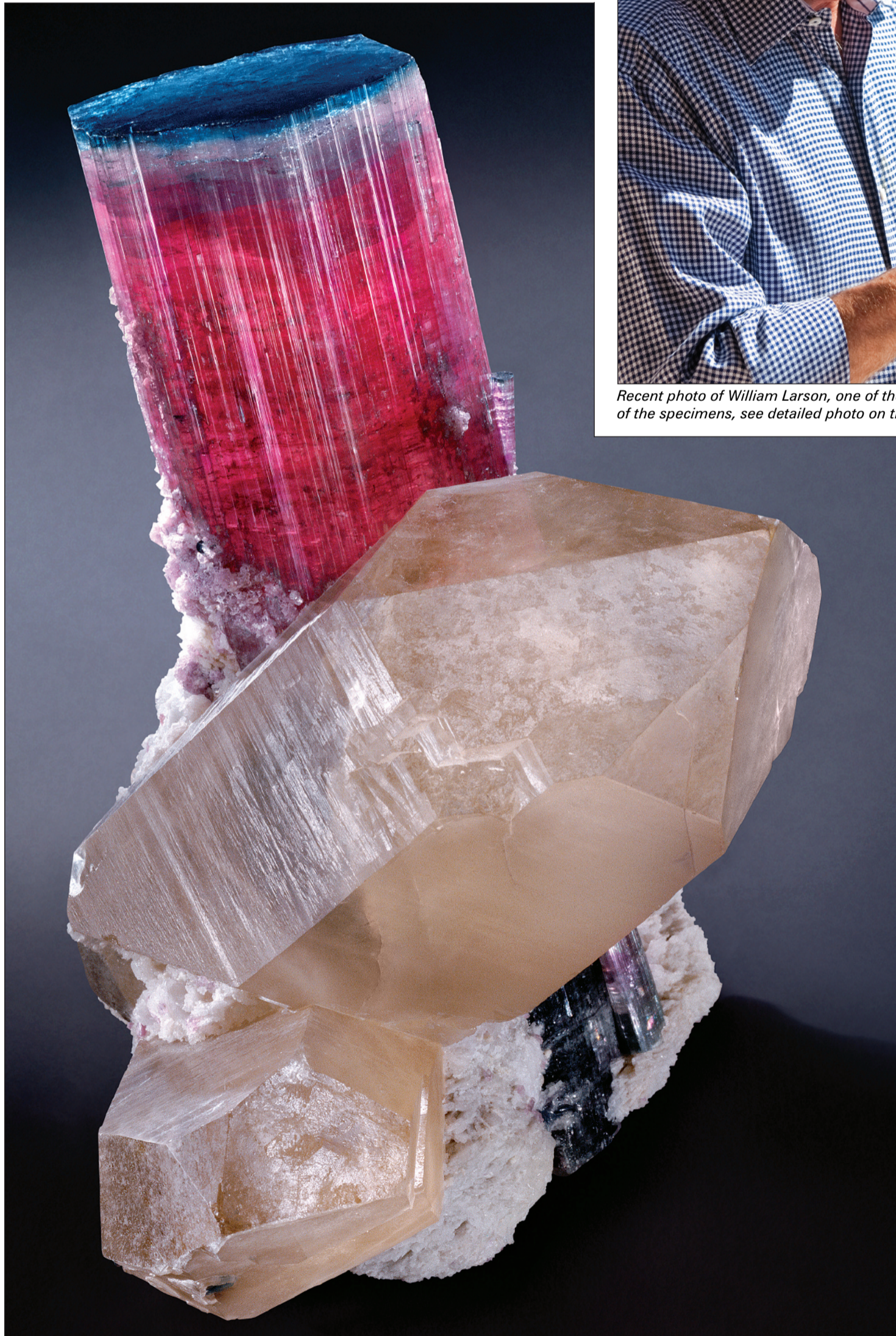
"Blue-cap" tourmaline crystal, 11.2 cm tall. S. Lawrence collection. Scovil photo.

by one foot, all solid feldspar, quartz and mica making up the walls and here in the center of this seemingly solid mass was a brown wet sticky mass of red clay. Exposed on one side of the opening was the 2x2-inch tourmaline scraped clean and glowing red in our light. I took my screwdriver out and checked the depth of the clay. It was deeper than my 10-inch long screwdriver as I could bury it up to the handle. I removed large globs of sticky clay from the center of the hole with my fingers and small ice picks. The pocket was definitely increasing. We worked for about an hour and removed four or five

crystals. We were back 18 inches from where John had exposed the pocket. I could still bury the screwdriver to the handle. "This is a pocket to call Ed about." I finally removed the tourmaline that John had exposed, leaving it for a final reward to pluck after the tedious pocket work. It came out easily in a single crystal, but was different than any of the other tourmalines found so far. When I cleaned it with my thumb, I felt a smooth glassy termination; and as it became cleaner we gasped. The termination was a bright indicolite blue. Here was a real treasure, a bicolor deep rubellite tourmaline with a vivid blue termi-



Recent photo of William Larson, one of the "blue-cap" pocket discoverers, holding one of the specimens, see detailed photo on the left. M. Mauthner photo.



One of the most spectacular specimens from the "blue-cap" pocket, 18 cm tall. Carl Larson collection. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.

nation. We tore ourselves away from the open pocket to await tomorrow when all could join in.

Ed and his wife, Kumja, came down early the next day. The tourmaline I had dug out was even more beautiful after cleaning, firing Ed's imagination. We wasted little time getting up the mountain. Ed got right in and began to probe. We brought in foam rubber pads to lie on and settled in for a day's work. Using his fingers, Ed removed glob after glob of clay; he was soon covered with red sticky mud. The clay had shards of quartz and feldspar through it, so you had to be careful not to slice your fingers. Gloves are impractical as they interfere with the sensitive touch necessary so you don't break anything important; and, of course, gloves pick up so much of the clay they soon weigh several pounds. Ed had been digging for several hours and had re-



"Blue-cap" tourmaline on quartz, 11.4 cm high. G. and J. Spann collection. B. Swoboda photo.



Freshly mined, still dirty "blue-cap" tourmaline on quartz with beer can as a scale. W. Larson photo.

moved 6 or 7 powder boxes of clay without finding a single tourmaline crystal.

Unfortunately, you do get pockets that are devoid of gems. This one had lots of quartz crystals and was now very large. It measured over 3x2x2 feet but with only one tourmaline. Every so often one of us would think we had a fine gem tourmaline only to discover it was a plastic screwdriver handle completely covered with red mud. Ed and I worked off and on until about 3 p.m. The pocket then got tight towards the back, and we gave up, wearing our disappointment. We forced smiles and cursed the mine a little. Ed had a 2 1/2 hour drive home, so he and Kumja left for Los Angeles and I went home to see if the beautiful colored

tourmaline really existed. Buzz and I were looking the piece over when John came in looking terribly muddy. He muttered something about the small tourmaline I left up there, the only one Ed had found. I said I didn't want it, remembering a 1-inch scrap. He grinned from ear to ear and said, "Well, it grew," and proceeded to hand me a 3x1 inch perfect crystal. "You quit too soon," quipped John, and he pulled another crystal out of his pocket and so on until we had five beautiful bicolor tourmalines in front of us. Total emotion is hard to describe but these brought tears to everyone's eyes. What a New Year's present. It was 6:30 p.m. and Ed would just be getting home. We phoned him and literally caught him coming in the front door. "We quit too soon" "See you at 9:30!" Across the room Karla asked, "9:30 tonight?!"

We called up two friends, Josie Scripps and Bryant Harris, to share the find. Josie didn't want to go up to the mine in the dark but was really excited about the find. At 9:30 we assembled: Ed, Buzz, Karla, Bryant, Carl (my father), and I. Fortified with a quick brandy, we drove through the night to the Stewart. The six of us piled into our yellow truck, a hilarious sight. I was elected to drive up the two-mile road; rough enough in the daytime, it was treacherous and dangerous at night. Slowly we inched our way up the mountain. The one close call we had resulted only in someone cursing about shaking up his beer, however, and on we went.



"Blue-cap" tourmalines on quartz, 26 cm high. Canadian Museum of Nature collection. M. Bainbridge photo.

Finally getting to the mine, people tumbled out of the truck trying to get oriented. It was quiet and beautiful overlooking Salmon City, the deserted old mining camp below. I wondered about how it had been the living quarters for the miners of the area in the early 1900's all the stories of highgrading at night. As our electric generator coughed into life, however, all visions of the old days vanished.

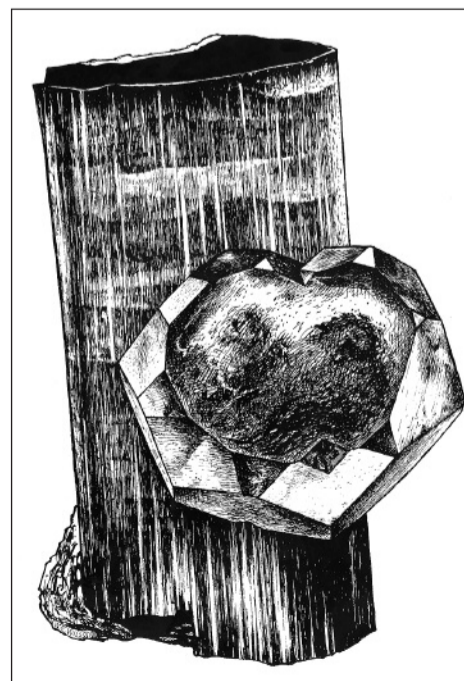
We almost raced down the now familiar adit to the pocket. It was really large now after we had worked it all day and John had expanded it in the evening. Ed laid at the pad and settled down to more profitable work. For ten minutes or so, no tourmalines showed up; and we had visions of another dry run. Then he hit a really big one, four inches at least, as he scraped his fingers along the crystal. A real artist at pocket removal, Ed

began exposing the crystal and another one nearby. The two were nearly parallel and visions of a matrix specimen danced in our heads. After another hour or so, enough material had been removed to show that they were only singles, but what singles! With the same fabulous colors, they were the finest crystals to date. Karla cleaned them with a little beer, and they looked beautiful. Each had a little damage on the terminations for these large crystals were originally attached to the roof of the pocket and were broken when they had detached eons ago. By the time these two crystals had been removed, the pocket was so far back that whoever was digging in it had to crawl into it. As it was nearing 4 a.m., we decided to call it a night. We knew there were more thrills awaiting us as this pocket would continue.

For the next week John cleared the area around the pocket. This was done by careful blasting using half or quarter sticks of dynamite. The original pocket had more or less played out, but two new ones had been discovered joining the original. It was during this time that Dean Luxton, an advanced collector and amateur photographer, rented a camper, filled up the back with a load of photography equipment and parked it at the Stewart Mine for several weeks. He lived and worked along with John and Jose in the Queen, all the time taking many invaluable photos. His aim was to create a slide presentation showing the tourmaline find at the Tourmaline Queen from beginning to end. He took over a thousand photos and has accomplished his idea. This document, one of the finest ever put together on mining, would be shown continuously in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City beginning in February 1973. The Los Angeles County Museum was also con-



Unique specimen known as "The Belly Button". Big "blue-cap" tourmaline with morganite crystal, 13 cm tall. P. Via specimen. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.



Pen and ink drawing of "The Belly Button" specimen by Wendell Wilson.



One of the most famous specimens from the "blue-cap" pocket – "The Rabbit Ears", 24 cm tall. Houston Museum of Natural Science collection. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.

tacted; and Barbara Lowe, the Assistant Curator, came down with a photographer. A few good pieces were removed while the cameras clicked, making this one of the first times a gem pocket had been accurately documented.

Wednesday night. After having exposed a nice single tourmaline during the day, I had asked my father to go up and dig it out. Driving the truck up the mountain for the second time was a little easier but still frightening. This night we encountered a problem, the electric generator refused to work. No amount of pulling, fiddling or cursing would make it work. For some reason, Carl thought to bring a large flashlight along; and we entered with it. As we got to the pocket, I forgot our troubles as the red translu-

cence shone back at us through the crystal I had exposed earlier. I tried unsuccessfully to remove it, but it was tightly attached. Our first matrix perhaps. To get at the pocket better, I had to use a double jack and chisel. The work went on slowly and I was further slowed by the cramped position. To get the results I wanted took the better part of an hour. Now I could start to remove the clay around the tourmaline. A quartz crystal began to take shape behind the tourmaline. They appeared to be attached; my heart raced, I felt a tremendous urge to rip the piece out to look at it, but I restrained myself and continued working completely around it. That is when the specimen took shape; it was really quite large, over a foot long. Then at the rear I



Cut stone 132.67 ct made from broken tourmaline from "blue-cap" pocket. W. Larson collection. M. Dixon photo.

found a second tourmaline attached. I knew then we had a great piece. I was ready for the final removal. We placed a small bar in the center; a gentle pressure was applied, and I could feel the entire mass move. What a thrill! I reached in with both hands and pulled out the now famous "candelabra" specimen. Over a foot long, it had two tourmalines on either end and in the center top was a place where a third tourmaline had once been attached. We dug for about 40 minutes more and found the third tourmaline. It was a perfect fit. It was a fabulous specimen, one of the finest ever.

Friday night. John had finished the necessary preparation of the two connecting pockets. One week of meticulous blasting and cleanup left the new pockets well exposed. All of us were terribly excited. The few single crystals found from washing the original pocket mud and a few new small ones from the two new pockets have all been that same beautiful bicolor blue top, red base. The group had gathered at the Stewart: Josie, Ed, Bryant, Buzz, Carl, and myself. The two pockets were about 18 inches apart, each being about 2 feet across. There were a couple of small tourmalines exposed in the bottom of one; this was a sight. While the others joked, drank beer and Pepsi, Ed and I each got into a pocket! The two pockets turned



"Candelabra", an iconic specimen believed to be the best from the "blue-cap" find, 30 cm wide and 23 cm tall. Smithsonian Institution collection. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.



One of the most unusual "blue-cap" specimens known as "The Beer Cans", 14 cm tall. Azurite Corporation specimen. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.

out to be interconnected; and if we worked out the bridge between them, we would have one working face. Shortly, Ed and I were stretched out working the same pocket and not even fighting for the same crystals. The singles were coming regularly. After we had each removed three or four fabulous singles, to a toast of beers, shouts and obscenities, Ed leaned over to me and said, "You know, I can die happily now!" Truly a dream come true. I was emotionally drained from the last two weeks' excitement. As it was getting dark, we went down for dinner which Karla had brought up to the Stewart. As the pocket really looked

more promising than ever, the men elected to go back up while Josie and Karla would go home and wash the crystals we had found. As we drove up the hill for the third time in the dark, the fog had set in creating an impressive setting. We all felt part of something quite special.

We were soon both back into the pocket. I didn't know what we would find, but I knew it was going to be great. Both of us were working only with our fingers; these pieces were too perfect to risk breakage. More and more singles showed up. The air was fairly blue with excited shouts as each new piece was wiped clean. One crystal would lay under another in a jumble, until we had 10 crystals exposed. One by one the pieces were removed. As I was working on the last few singles, I wiped my fingers across what appeared to be quartz crystal; it showed deep salmon pink. "Morganite," I shouted.

The others crowded around and murmured enthusiastically. As I was working around it, I hit another morganite. This one was a cluster, but there was just too much excitement already. I worked slowly for half an hour, and they came out. They were matrix morganites, and the matrix was tourmaline. No one could believe it. Morganite on tourmaline? Impossible! Unique, fantastic! Yet here they were.

I continued working and pulled out a perfect quartz crystal, thought little of it, and worked on. About 2 hours later, we had worked the pocket to near completion. As it was quite late, we decided to take our loot and go home. The girls were waiting; the kitchen table was covered with newspapers and the 10 tourmalines from earlier were laid in a row sparkling clean. We unloaded our five dynamite boxes full of goodies and mud

Recent photo of William Larson, one of the "blue-cap" pocket discoverers, holding one of the specimens, see below detailed photo. M. Mauthner photo.



One of the greatest specimens from the "blue-cap" pocket. Two tourmalines with morganite, 18 cm high. W. Larson specimen. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.



One of the great "blue-cap" clusters with quartz, 12 cm tall. Azurite Corporation specimen. H. and E. Van Pelt photo.

and began to clog every drain in the house. All the pieces were saved, for many of the specimens would have to be repaired, creating jigsaw nightmares. As we got most of the pieces cleaned, I found a second tourmaline crystal that fit on the morganite cluster specimen; this was too much. This piece is unique; and, in my opinion, one of the finest specimens in existence.

I cleaned the large quartz crystal that was so perfect and that we had thought so little of, only to discover that it had places where two tourmalines fit. These were quite easily found; the resulting specimen took everyone's breath away. We knew we had three magnificent pieces, the candelabra and these two new pieces. We all had a toast of brandy and stumbled off to sleep.

During the next several days, the drama was repeated twice again on a much smaller scale with the discovery of two more major pieces. It was February, and we had been planning to have a mine party the week before the Tucson show. A hurried list was made up, and invitations rushed out; the museum curators were called and most were able to attend. Pala had never been so beautiful as Monday, February 7, 1972. Over 100 individuals gathered at the Stewart. Several cases of champagne and beer were consumed while questions about the find, the previous work, etc., were answered, and nature was just generally appreciated. As evening began, everyone went down to the Collector Shop about 25 minutes away for the unveiling of the goodies. My own favorite memory of the day was going into the back of our shop and viewing the candelabra with Dr. Peter Embrey and Dr. Pierre Bariand on either side of Paul Desautels, who was down on his knees examining the piece destined

to grace the halls of the Smithsonian Institution. Two weeks later, when Dr. Vince Manson of the American Museum of Natural History was visiting after the Tucson show was history, he summed up our feelings in one phrase. "In terms of color and degree of perfection, This is the find of the Century."

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William Larson holding freshly mined specimen, same specimen on photo below, 26 cm wide. J. Scripps photo.

Journal presentations: Mineral Up



Joaquim Callén editor and publisher of the Mineral Up magazine holding three versions of the same issue, in English, Catalan and Spanish. E. Artola photo.

QUALITY

MINERAL UP is printed in 21x28 cm format, 72 pages, on very high quality 150 g glossy paper, covered by a protective varnish, with plastic cover of 300 g paper. Our goal is that it should preserve mineralogical information for many years to come.

WEB PAGE

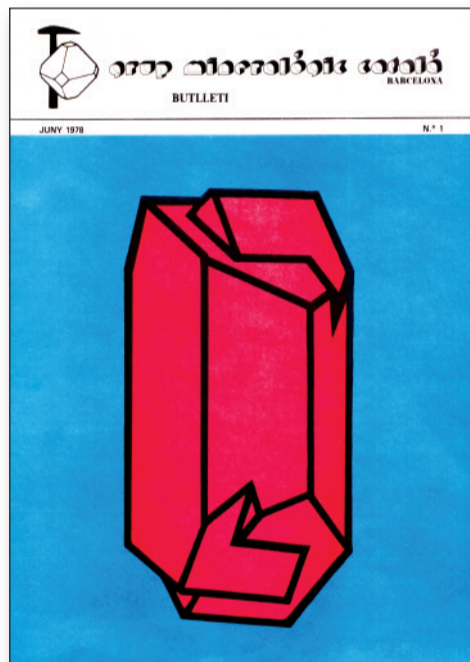
We think that paper is more stable than that the web, but we are making changes in our websites to post part of the contents of the magazine there, especially photographs and complementary texts that we were not able to fit into the magazine because of space constraints.

You can visit us at: www.mineral-up.net

More information about photography of minerals at: www.Joaquim-Callen.cat, e-mail: JoaquimCallen@mineralup.net, also on Facebook.

MISSION

Mineral Up is a magazine about minerals, for mineral collectors and by mineral collectors. We publish articles about everything from micromounts to



The first issue of the Mineralogistes de Catalunya – predecessor to Mineral Up.

museum pieces, covering European and worldwide topics on mineralogy from the collector's point of view. We consider photography to be very important. We think that a photograph is not merely a decorative complement to an article, it is the article as well.

HISTORY

Mineral Up could arguably be considered the third incarnation of this mineral magazine, which was born as a modest bulletin.

In 1977, the *Grup Mineralògic Català* (Mineralogical Association of Catalonia) was founded in Barcelona, beginning as a small group of mineral fans that would eventually become one of the biggest clubs in Southern Europe. The following year, it was decided to make a bulletin, which quickly grew into a magazine called *Mineralogistes de Catalunya* (Mineralogist of Catalonia). In 1995, in collaboration with other clubs outside of Catalonia the club decided to make a version in Spanish with the name *Revista de Minerale*s (Mineral Review). After a radical change in design and content, the English version appeared under the name *Mineral Up* in 2006.



Covers of recent issues of the Mineral Up. J. Callén photo.

Joaquim Callén, the publisher of Mineral Up and the Mineral Up Calendar, lives with his wife Eloisa in a house surrounded by woods and mountains 20 km from Barcelona. There they run their photo-studio and a small specialized publishing house. They often have to travel to different cities in Europe and America, to take photographs for Mineral Up,



Logo of Mineral Up magazine.

the Mineral Calendar, private collectors, and editorial projects. Joaquim and Eloisa also have strong ties to Hawaii, where they spend part of each year.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Two issues of the magazine Mineral Up and one *Mineral Up Benefit Calendar of Minerals* are published every year. The spring edition is published in May and the fall edition is published in October along with the Calendar of Minerals. The cover price is 14 euros and the annual magazine subscription is 17 euros (2 issues), plus the cost of shipping (4.80 euros in Europe; 5.90 euros to North America). The Calendar of Minerals is distributed freely to subscribers of the magazine at the mineral shows of Munich and Tucson. The Calendar is also distributed for free at the booths of dealers who contributed to its production. It is also possible to get it on request by paying only the shipping cost.

MINERAL UP BENEFIT CALENDAR OF MINERALS

With the desire to combine minerals, photography, and to help disadvantaged children, the *Benefit Calendar of Minerals* was born.

Production costs are funded by the dealers and collectors who provide their minerals to be photographed. They receive a certain number of calendars to distribute among friends and clients for free. The calendar aims to show the beauty of minerals, but also specifically seeks to remind the viewers that there are people treated unfairly in the mining industry, and that together, we must do something to help them. Joaquim requests that if you like the calendar, you should make a voluntary contribution to a non-profit organization of your choice to help children living in poverty in mining areas.



Mineral Up benefit calendar. Money earned from it helps children living in poverty in mining areas. J. Callén photo.



Cover of the first issue of Mineral Up published in 2006.

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I travel the USA photographing collections at major shows and in private homes and businesses. I also visit European shows in Munich and Sainte-Marie-Aux-Mines. You can also send specimens to my studio. I work in digital (DSLR) and large format (4x5 film) photography for the web, advertising, publications, education and insurance. Contact me to discuss pricing and scheduling.

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Gail and Jim Spann, collector couple from Texas, USA, who built a world class collection in 8 years.

In our *Collector interview* series we try to show different perspectives and different people. We have already interviewed a professional photographer, a famous collector of huge specimens and the Mindat.org founder. This time we



Living room looking more like a museum in Gail and Jim's house. G. Spann photo.

would like to interview relatively new collectors who very seriously involved in the world of minerals.

Jim and Gail Spann started collecting 8 years ago, but during this relatively short period they have become completely engaged by the hobby. In a short



Beryl var. aquamarine with great etching figures; 15.2 cm high. Medina mine, Minas Gerais, Brazil. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

time they have built a world-class collection, one of the most important in the world, with numerous top quality specimens. They keep their specimens in showcases in their home in Rockwall, Texas, USA, which looks more like a museum than a regular house. They are both very open and strongly involved in many projects in the mineral collecting community.

Tomasz Praszki (Minerals): *How and when did you start collecting minerals? What triggered your new-found interest?*

Gail Spann: We started almost eight years ago, when we first went into a shop in Breckenridge, Colorado, while getting acclimated to the altitude. Jim had been reading about rhodochrosite and I was more into looking at fossils for our home. But we bought our first significant piece there, from the Hedgehog pocket, Sweet Home mine, Colorado, USA. I was shocked at how much a "rock" cost!

Jim Spann: After seeing Gail's "price shock", I took her to the Houston Museum of Nature & Science to show her what the very best rhodochrosites were like, such as the Alma Queen. She was so impressed by the fine minerals on display that she promptly got on the internet to learn more about them. Her most famous line is: "Hey Honey! You can buy



Beryl var. heliodore; 12.9 cm high. Volodarsk Volynskii, Zhytomyr, Ukraine. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

Collector interview: Gail and Jim Spann (USA)



Scheelite on muscovite; 21 cm wide. Mt. Xuebaoding, Sichuan, China. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

this stuff!". I knew then that this was a hobby that we could learn about together while enjoying the passions that we each had for it. Collecting minerals was a natural fit for us, since Gail professionally had an art background with



Rhodochrosite with quartz; 14.7 cm wide. Sweet Home mine, Colorado, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

a technical aptitude and I had a technically oriented "mining" (i.e. oil and gas) background with an eye for art. It was a hobby perfectly suited to our interests and talents!

TP: *Do you still have your first specimen?*

GS: We do have it. It sits rather proudly in our American minerals cabinet amongst a few other Sweet Home Mine rhodochrosites.

JS: It is a 20x11 cm plate that we got in December, 2004, with sharp pinkish red rhombs up to 1.5 cm on a bed of long thin quartz needles. We got it just after the mine had been closed and plugged, not realizing that the portal was only five miles from our winter home in the mountains of Colorado or that it produced the best rhodochrosites in the world!

TP: *Have you ever collected in the mines? Where would you like to try your luck?*

GS: We have, and we loved it. I was unsure how I would feel in the depths of a mountain, but I was quite comfortable and found it quite thrilling.

JS: There is nothing more magical than the sound of "tap.. tap.. thunk" as you hit a hollow spot in a rock wall with your hammer. Gail had done that within minutes of entering a tight, narrow crawl-space and opened up a brand new pocket with blue fluorites! I also was lucky and opened a new pocket with brilliant blue linarite crystals about 2 meters down-dip. We were lying prone with my head near her feet and we both had a new pocket opened at the same time! We have several of those pieces in our display cases today. We did this in a mine near Bingham, New Mexico, as the guests of the mine owner. He also found a spec-



Showcases in Spann's house. G. Spann photo.

tacular pocket that day and I insisted that Gail was his "good luck charm", hoping that he would invite us back again. He did.

TP: *How many specimens do you have in your collection? How are they organized?*



Jim and Gail with their first specimen of rhodochrosite which began their adventure with minerals. C. Hurley photo.



One of many Spann showcases in their house. G. Spann photo.

GS: We have over 6,800 specimens, all very much appreciated. They are organized, right now, as locality cabinets. We move our minerals around to enjoy



Native gold, 6.2 cm wide. Eagles Nest Mine, California, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

them in different settings. At this point we have 32 large cabinets (including 6 double-wides) and more are on the way.

JS: We like to display our collection by geographic region or country. I have



Favorite specimen of Jim – pyrrargyrite from Schlema, Germany; 9.7 cm high. G. Spann photo.

been painstakingly cataloging our collection from inception to capture as much information as possible about each piece. Since we are worldwide collectors of all specimen sizes, we are able to monitor what we have from each country or species and to determine what we need to round out various mineral or locality suites. This also allows us to track what we paid for a piece and whether we need to “average down” our cost per item or to gloat when we have underpaid for a piece!

TP: Which specimen do you consider to be your best?

GS: I just love so many of them, but for me I would say it is a rhodochrosite with fluorite, quartz and pyrite called the “Wutong Princess”. It resembles a large rose and I take joy every time I look at it, which is quite often!

JS: It is 23x17x18 cm, has bright red translucent flattened rhombohedral sharp-edged crystals up to 11x11x0.5 cm, which are interlaced into a boxwork pattern. The obverse side has a large cluster of pale blue cuboctahedral transparent fluorite crystals up to 14 mm across. It is the largest rhodochrosite specimen known to be in a private collection today from the Wutong mine in Liubao, China. Only the famous “Emperor” and “Empress” pieces from Wutong are larger and better known.

I also have many favorites, but I think our best one is “an ugly black rock” from the classic locale of Alberoda, Schlema-Hartenstein District, Erzgebirge, Saxony, Germany. It is a large heavy floater (9.7x6.5x6.0 cm), consisting entirely of very sharp-edged metallic dark gray pyrrargyrite crystals, with huge elongated hexagonal crystals up to 20 mm across each face and small stephanite. It is my favorite “hunk of silver”.



“Alien” fluorite, 7.8 cm tall. Erongo, Namibia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

TP: What kind of specimens are your favorites?

GS: I have a love of hematite, from Cumbria to South Africa. I think many people know I have a passion for hemimorphite from Mexico as well. Smithsonite from all areas of the world, olmiite from N'Chwaning mine, South Africa.



Gail playing with her favorite specimen, one of the world best rhodochrosite. Detailed photo on the right. J. Spann photo.

JS: I love ‘em all! I focus more on the details along with the associated minerals and use our stereo microscope to study the cavities on nearly every specimen. I even got a 38x33 cm azurite, cuprite and malachite plate “under the scope” and found some unusual pseudomorphing that raised some curious paragenesis questions. I had a great time discussing the waffling crystalliza-



Cut (0.62 ct) and rough haüyne. Eifel, Germany. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

tion environment with the scientists. Rhodochrosites from around the globe have always appealed to me and manganese minerals generally. Scheelites, especially from China, and titanite and other titanium minerals are among my favorites, as well.

TP: You have a lot of world-class specimens, but at the same time you also have many reference specimens, or just curiosities. Apparently you are not purely “trophy collectors”. Can you explain your collecting philosophy? Why do you think that collecting more than just top quality specimens has value?

GS: We are true mineral collectors. We see the value of every mineral we have, from the common to the uncommon.



Grossular, 2 cm wide. Lowell, Vermont, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

JS: We see beauty in all forms, whether it be due to color, shape or combinations of minerals. We also enjoy diversity and variety by incorporating geography and different geologic environments into our collecting themes. I like to think that our collection can appeal to many different categories of reviewers, ranging from the casual non-collector to the trophy hunter to the hard-core scientist to the ‘cut and rough’ gem collector to



One of many Spann showcases in their house. G. Spann photo.

the species or locality collector and even to the thumbnail collector. People that see our collection will quickly notice that we have very esoteric tastes as well and like to add novel or distinctive pieces to the collection. We have been quietly expanding our rarities suite, too. Many of our earlier “reference” pieces have been retained to help educate our children and grand-children about the vagaries of mineral resources and geography. They are systematically being passed down into their collections as time passes.



One of the world best and biggest rhodochrosite specimen, known as “Wutong Princess”, 23 cm wide with the biggest crystal 11 cm long! Wutong, Guangxi, China. G. and J. Spann collection. B. Swoboda photo.



Shelves with specimens exhibited in Spann's house. Upper shelf with "blue-cap" tourmalines from California, USA; size up to 9.8 cm. Lower shelf with native copper specimens from Michigan; size up to 16 cm. USA. G. Spann photos.

TP: You are fairly new to collecting - have you noticed any changes in pricing or quality of specimens since joining this hobby?

GS: We have evolved as the market has changed. Nothing seems drastic, but since we only started 8 years ago it's been fairly consistent with the quality of the minerals we see. There seems to be a never ending parade of wonderful min-

erals available, some bargains and some perhaps not such a bargain. This is where we have to decide if we say "no thanks".

JS: Quality has held up well during our tenure, especially as older collections have been recycled back into the market. We are hearing more frequently that high quality new material is getting harder to obtain, which shouldn't be a surprise given the advances in mechanized mining and geopolitical tensions around the world. When that fact is combined with a surge in customers, especially at the higher quality end of the hobby, it is not surprising to see that prices have continued to escalate and to bifurcate among market price levels. This is the one hobby that is practiced by all cultures around the world. Thus, when local currencies are perceived as being devalued, then there is a tendency to seek hard assets, like fine minerals, gems, silver and gold, that retain their relative value regardless of "price", as measured in paper money.

TP: There are a lot of collectors that prefer to stay private and don't come to shows or publicly exhibit their specimens. You are different; open and extremely involved in the collecting community. Is there some special reason for this?

GS: We believe that to grow the hobby you should educate people who know nothing about minerals. You should share their provenance, beauty and scientific importance. We are very much about sharing our love of minerals.



Twinned phosphophyllite, 2.4 cm high. Unificada mine, Potosi, Bolivia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Group of weloganite crystals, 5.2 cm high. Francon quarry, Canada. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Chrysoberyl var. alexandrite photographed in daylight (left) and artificial light (right) showing great color change, size 2.7 cm. Malyshevo, Urals, Russia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Carrollite, 4.8 cm high. Kamoya, D. R. Congo. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Rhodochrosite, 5.2 cm high. Sweet Home mine, Colorado, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Hemimorphite, 4.3 cm high. Santa Eulalia, Chihuahua, Mexico. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Beryl var. aquamarine with quartz, 9.6 cm high. Erongo Mts, Namibia. G. and J. Spann collection. T. Spann photo.

JS: In addition, Gail and I are "party animals". We love to visit with like-minded collectors that also bring different experiences and perspectives to our world. We have met more fascinating people in the mineral world than we could have imagined. It is quite exhilarating! They come from all walks of life, whether rich or poor, famous or pedestrian, Asian, European, African, Latin or American, it does not matter. Fine mineral collecting is the ultimate "equalizer".

TP: Does the fact that you are "good buyers" make your collecting difficult?

GS: Not really. We find that people are really pleased that we appreciate their involvement in the mineral world. There are a few dealers who have been very pushy, but we do not do business with them. That's not how we like to do business. All in all we have become friends with many collectors and dealers, miners and associates of the world of minerals. We are very comfortable with being good buyers and hope to continue to be.

JS: I agree. We both have a "good eye" for quality and we prefer to deal with folks that consistently have top quality selections and who make us feel comfortable while we spend time with them. Since time is the "scarcest resource" of all, it should be spent wisely. We do try to keep track of pricing trends, which we temper by our own views on beauty and future value. Since Gail and I both have experience "doing the deal" (especially in the oil and gas financial world), we find the transaction end of the hobby to be a fun challenge. We have also confirmed that "cash is king" and can often lead to deeper discounts. We find that dealers that enjoy working with us and know that they will get paid on time



Sperrylite on chalcopyrite, 3.2 cm high. Norilsk, Siberia, Russia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Lironite, 2.9 cm high. Wheal Gorland, Cornwall, UK. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Rhodochrosite with pyrite, 10 cm high. Mexico. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Budd photo.

are more likely to bring a great piece to us first, which occasionally turns out to be a "world's best". We have several now, as a result, without having to chase up "auction" prices to win them. Having a good eye and knowledge can help in that instance, so that we can step up confidently and feel good about the outcome.

TP: Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed by the dealers, do you see that as a problem? Do you think that this might be the reason why so many high-end collectors are so "private"?

GS: I can't answer for many other collectors, but have heard from a few that se-

curity is an issue, or being constantly barraged by pushy people. I don't feel overwhelmed, and I know Jim doesn't either. We are grown up enough to handle anyone that comes on too strong. Sometimes you just have to tell people they are too aggressive and they usually back off. I think this is why being a couple in



Superb huge aquamarine and feldspar specimen from Shigar, Pakistan. Size 30x19 cm. G. Spann photo.



Fluorite with muscovite from from Gilgit, Pakistan. Size 12.4 cm. G. Spann photo.

the mineral market works well for us. We have each other to talk things over with, to bounce ideas off of or to vent about bothersome issues.

JS: Absolutely. As prices and values have climbed, so has the focus on security and protecting what you own. We have consciously elected not to have a lot of gold and silver specimens for this reason. We like to spread around our mineral acquisitions among a large number of dealers, which can often lead to disappointment when we run out of time or money at a show. I do wish that we were not in such a transparent "fish bowl" at times, which can lead to bickering and ill-will among the dealers.

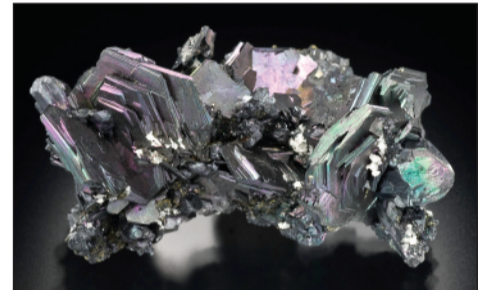
TP: You are actively involved in the collecting community, organizing events, supporting projects, etc. Gail



Pyromorphite from Bunker Hill, Idaho, USA. 10 cm high. G. Spann photo.



Smithsonite, 3.9 cm high. Tsumeb, Namibia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Polybasite, 4.6 cm wide. Husky mine, Yukon, Canada. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

is very active on-line as a photographer and contributor to several forums. Why do you do that? So few people have the desire, let alone find the time to do something more than just collect - why are you different?

WESTWARD LOOK SHOW

TWELFTH ANNUAL EVENT

FEBRUARY 8-11, 2013

Graeber & Himes | The Arkenstone | eShop-Minerals | Victor Yount | Exceptional Minerals Mineral Masterpiece | Wilensky Fine Minerals | Crystal Classics | Weinrich Minerals Lithographie | Mineral Décor | Collector's Edge Minerals | Wendel Minerals | Ausrox Marcus Budil - Fine Minerals | Pala International | Miner's Lunchbox | Dave Bunk Minerals Green Mountain Minerals | Brian & Brett Kosnar - Mineral Classics | Watzl Minerals Wayne A. Thompson Fine Minerals | H. Obodda | Western Minerals | Stonetrust | Kristalle Heliodor | The Sunnywood Collection | Roberts Minerals | Mike Bergmann Minerals Alpine Mineral Company | Escout Minerals International | Gobin | Red Gallery Fine Minerals International - Daniel Trinchillo | Unique Minerals | United Dealers of Europe

WESTWARD LOOK RESORT 245 E. INA RD., TUCSON, AZ

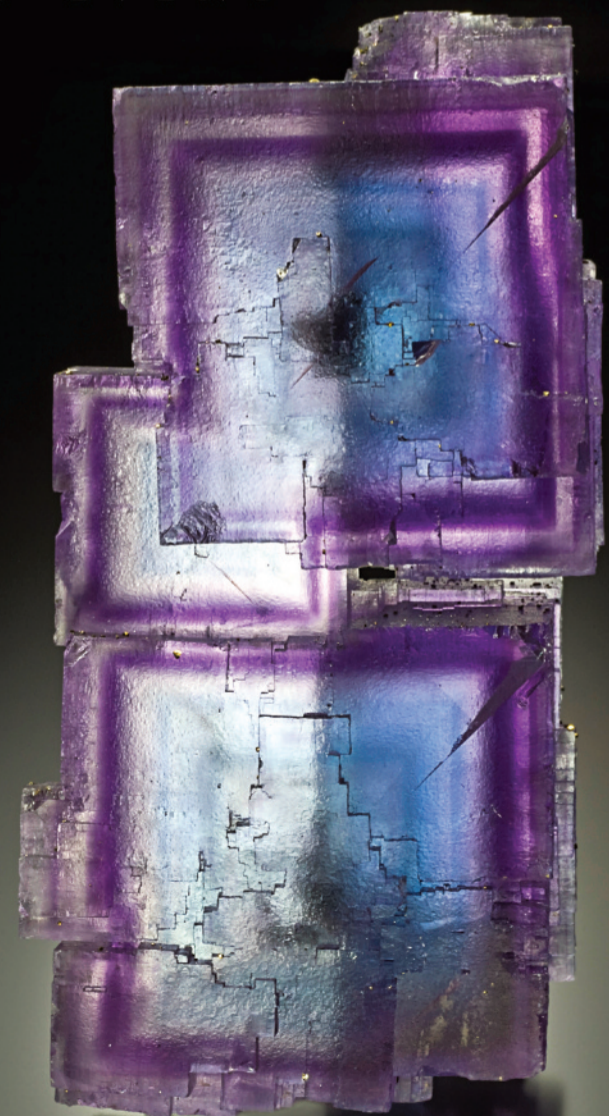
For more information: info@finemineralshow.com or visit FineMineralShow.com

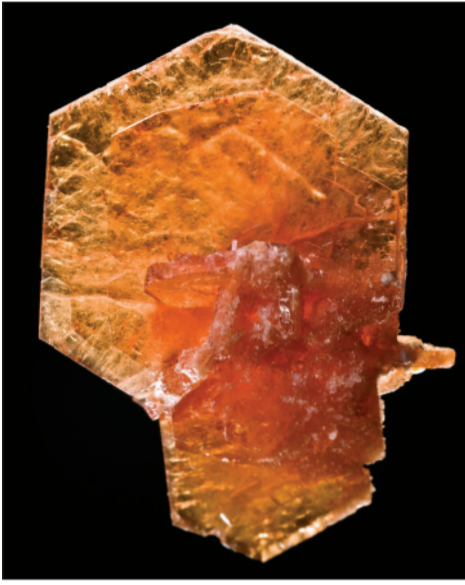
SATURDAY

"Collector Day" with Kevin Brown showing his private collection of American minerals. Meet and talk with Kevin in the lobby of the Westward Look Resort from 10am-4pm, February 9th.

SUNDAY EVENING PROGRAM

"What's Diggin' - Recent Activity at the Adelaide, Rogerley and Oceanview Mines". It will be very special, as we are moving our event to the resort's famous restaurant, "Gold", with the spectacular view of the City of Tucson. The Social Time begins at 6 pm on the two terrace levels before going into Gold for the presentations at 7:30 pm. Everyone is welcome.





Bastnäsité-Ce, 2.2 cm high. Trimouns, France. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Budd photo.



Smithsonite, 3.8 cm high. Tsumeb, Namibia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

GS: I ask myself that often. Why are we different? The mineral world is our hobby, our place to enjoy good friends, good minerals and we want to see more people enjoy what we enjoy. I also know that you need to be involved if you want to see something continue, or to change things. You cannot rely on others to make things happen because they need help too. It was John Veevaert's show reports that inspired me to do mine. I just couldn't get enough of his photos and write ups, so I started the "Gail Spann show reports" for others who can't get to them, who can live the experience through my photos and quips. The many thank you notes I get make it really worthwhile. We should all contribute back to the community.



Epidote with hairy byssolite, 7.3 cm wide. Knappenwand, Salzburg, Austria. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

JS: We are both high energy people that are always looking for the next adventure or new experience. We only have so much time on this earth, so we want to live it to the fullest. Gail is gifted in many ways and her photographing "people having fun" is one of her talents. She is the consummate "organizer" and likes to make things happen. Gail is constantly thinking about interesting new projects and about how to share our experiences with others as encouragement for them to try it themselves. We both have significant conflicting demands on our time (building my business and her bicycling advocacy), so we work as a team to manage the stresses and temper the conflicts.

TP: Tell us about any mineralogical projects in which you are involved.

GS: I am the current coordinator for the Mineralogical Association of Dallas (MAD) and this is my second time to do so. I am a Moderator on Mindat.org for the Women's forum as well as a Manager. I am active in the Friends of Minerals



Rhodochrosite with manganite, 4.8 cm wide. N'Chwaning II mine, RSA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Fluorite with aquamarine, 22 cm high! Chumar Bakhoor, Hunza Valley, Pakistan. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

eral exhibit at the University of Arizona museum next year. We are sending a group of minerals to the Africa exhibition at the Munich Show this November by invitation. We have agreed to a long term loan of numerous top quality specimens to the new Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, Texas that will be opening in December, 2012.

TP: The collecting "disease" has spread within your family. Your son photographs and sells minerals, does



Cyclic twin of chrysoberyl, 3.4 cm wide. Itaguaçu, Espírito Santo, Brazil. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

Forum (FMF) and moderate a number of the threads. I am about to do some interviews for publications and have been asked to be a guest speaker for the Tucson Gem and Mineral show, along with Jim, for 2013 and 2014. I sit on the advisory board of the Perot Museum of Nature and Science and Jim and I serve on the Mineral Hall committee. We are major donors to the Museum as well.

JS: I support Gail's activities and I am proud of what she does for the community. We jointly assembled a competition case in 2008 and won the Paul Desautels Trophy at the Tucson Gem & Mineral Show, which we are considering doing again. We also provided numerous specimens for the American Treasures and Arizona Treasures exhibits in 2008 and 2011. We are going to be long-term contributors of specimens to the China min-



Baryte, 11.4 cm wide. Frizington, Cumbria, UK. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Silver, 12.4 cm high. Kongsberg, Norway. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

he also collect? Is this a competition for you, or do you get parental first pick in lieu of cutting him out of any inheritance?

GS: Oh boy, these are tough questions! Ha ha! We are thrilled our son is active in the mineral world. He is an excellent photographer and he has a very small collection. Mostly he sells minerals. We don't believe in family competition, so no worries there! So far, he is safe in the inheritance department as long as he behaves himself and keeps bringing his lovely wife and gorgeous children around to see us once in a while!!!!



Chromian uvite, 2.4 cm high. Arusha, Tanzania. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

Our three other children are appreciative of minerals and they have a nice collection as well.

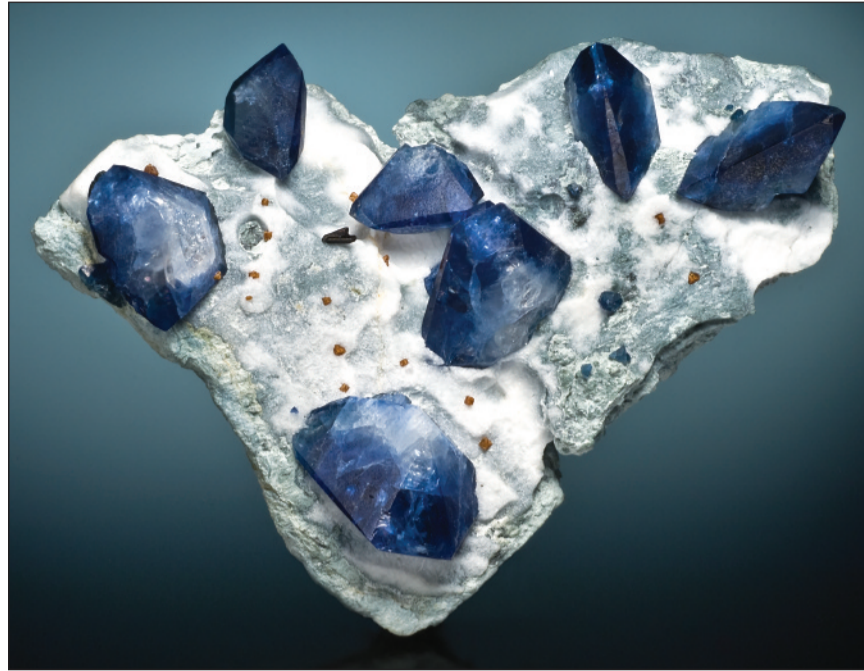
JS: I prefer to call it the collecting "gene" that you either have at birth or not. It



Bastnäsité-Ce cut and rough, specimen 2.9 cm wide, cutstone 1.2 cm wide. Zagi Mountain, Hammedabad, Pakistan. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

runs in the family. Gail and I both had it long before we met (for example, we were both collectors of bicycles and our combined "collection" is well over 40 bikes!). I am proud of our son, Tom's, interest in minerals, dealing and photography. He caught the bug by studying our collection early on and it appears that his children also have the collecting desire, as well. Tom will often point out a special piece for us to consider acquiring, since most of his capital goes into building his business rather than into his collection.

TP: In the history of collecting there have been, and still are, very few



Benitoite with joaquinite and neptunite, 7.1 cm wide. Benitoite Gem mine, California, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

women. In recent years you are one of very few women actively involved in minerals. Why do think this is a male dominated hobby?

GS: It's hard to go back and figure it out as much of the domination simply baffles me, but I do believe anything scientific was aimed at men, by men. The societies were all male and women were simply not expected to be a part of it. Even seven years ago I found a lot of push back when I would roam around on my own.

JS: In addition, many male dealers just don't know how to talk to women or how to create a non-threatening environment. (Two burly men in dirty tee-shirts scowling at the door is not an invitation to enter.) They often assume that women are not informed. As Gail's partner I was able to help her through some rough spots, which kept her from giving up on this hobby more than once. I have also seen that certain men will try to berate women if they are less knowledgeable, rather than try to inform them, especially if they are opinionated as well.

TP: Is it a patriarchal/sexist family model that hobby/collecting is only boys' domain - "playing with rocks and dirt is not for women"?

Chalcocite, 4.5 cm high. Bristol, Connecticut, USA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

GS: Oh, some of that might be true, but you have to be a person who "gets it" whether male or female. As you know, I "get it". I think with the Earth Sciences being taught in schools that there are no gender boundaries.

JS: In our community I have noticed a lot more young girls expressing an interest in mineral collecting than young boys. Not sure why, but there has been a growing number of enthusiastic young women that are being encouraged by their parents to develop their knowledge and



Hematite and ettringite on calcite, 6.5 cm wide. N'Chwaning II mine, RSA. G. and J. Spann collection. T. Spann photo.

skills. Gail and I try to reinforce an interest in mineral collecting among the younger folks, regardless of gender, and always try to send-off young visitors with a mineral sampler.

TP: Or, in your opinion, is there a psychological difference between man and woman?



Liddicoatite, 12.5 cm wide. Minh Tien mine, Luc Yen, Vietnam. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Rhodochrosite, 4.3 cm high. Uchucchacua mine, Lima, Peru. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

GS: Oh now that's a loaded question! I think the proper question should be is there a psychological difference between collectors and non-collectors. Some peo-



Cubanite, 1.8 cm wide. Chibougamau, Quebec, Canada. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

ple are born to collect, I know I was. Minerals are just another "passion for collecting" episode in my life. It all started with dolls from around the world

and I have never slowed down. With Jim it was stamps and baseball cards. We are lifelong collectors.

JS: I think that it is more sociological than psychological. There are many women ranked among the top mineralogists in the world who are greatly respected for their knowledge and contributions to science (as an example, the next lead author in Dana's prestigious Manual of Mineral Science text book series will likely be a highly respected woman, who co-authored the 23rd edition). Women who are encouraged to pursue their mineralogical or geological



Wulfenite, 5.8 cm high. Helena mine, Mezica, Slovenia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

aptitudes can excel in the field just as well as the men.

TP: There are many female art collectors, why not female collectors of natural art?

GS: I owned and operated an art gallery most of my life. Art is everywhere, in people's homes, offices, on T.V. and we teach it in schools. Natural Minerals are not seen everywhere. People don't know that you can own minerals, they think they are just in museums. We need to let people know that you can actually buy minerals to bring home. When we "package"



Topaz with quartz and albite, 17 cm high. Gaoligong Mts, Yunnan, China. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

the desire to own minerals for their beauty, their rarity, their value...just as in art, we will finally reach the multitudes of women who will see the joy of owning such amazing minerals.

JS: Well said. One way that we have discovered to kindle that interest in women is through "cut and rough" gemstone and mineral crystal displays. We often have male collectors visit our home with their spouse, who is often disinterested until she sees the beauty of the gems and realizes that their genesis is a mineral crystal. Before you know it, she is looking through the mineral cabinets for another gem beauty and is asking questions about the minerals and suddenly "gets it". It never fails.

TP: Do you see any parallel between that problem and a lack of collectors in certain cultures?



Whewellite, 2.5 cm high. Dalnegorsk, Primorye, Russia. G. and J. Spann collection.



Cuprite, malachite, 8 cm high. Emke mine, Onganja, Namibia. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Twinned cerusite from Tsumeb, Namibia. 13.3 cm wide. G. and J. Spann collection. G. Spann photo.



Shigaite with rhodochrosite, 2.2 cm high. Wessels mine, RSA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Tourmaline from the famous Jonas mine, Brazil; 4.5 cm high. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

GS: I really don't have enough experience to know the answer to this, but I suppose the money spent on anything that doesn't feed, or clothe, or offer a roof over the head might not be readily available for such things.

JS: I had to chuckle, because that is the same complaint I hear from male collectors in the USA that tell me about how often their spouse objects to a new acquisition! It may be less cultural and more disposable income oriented, with priorities driving the issue.

TP: *Any thoughts on how to expand the hobby to include both genders?*

GS: We should do more to show how minerals are part of the home. We should advertise that minerals are like art, and when minerals are sold they should

come with a story. People like to show off their knowledge on a beautiful piece of art hanging on the wall, why not a mineral in a cabinet? Many of the ads in publications show a wonderful mineral just sitting there, well photographed, but alien to being in a household. Why not



Celestine, 9.4 cm high. Sakoany, Mahajanga, Madagascar. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

show that mineral in someone's living room, or study? It brings the idea that minerals are integrated into the decoration of someone's home. This, as far as I know, has never been done before. Forgive me if I am wrong.

JS: Sometimes male collectors are their own worst enemy. Gail wrote a rather humorous article a few years ago that listed the top ten things that a man

should never do if he wants his wife to like minerals. One example was to never put a flat full of dirty rocks wrapped in toilet paper on her spotless kitchen counter! In hind-sight, these are obvious points, but most men don't consider the consequences of these actions.

TP: *What are your plans for the future? Are there any thoughts of changing your collecting focus?*

GS: Plans... hmmm. I know I plan to keep collecting for as long as possible. I take such joy in each piece we add. I think it is natural for people to change their collecting focus over many years, it keeps the collecting fun and special. We'll just have to see where we go from here.

JS: We have accumulated more specimens than we have room to display, even after our house expansion project that is



Fluorite, 4.3 cm high. Aguille Verte, Mt. Blanc massif, France. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.



Kutnohorite on doubly twinned calcite, 4.6 cm high. Wessels mine, RSA. G. and J. Spann collection. J. Scovil photo.

under-way. Gail keeps talking about wanting a 5-inch gap between specimens in our cabinets, rather than the ½-inch presently! We plan to sort through our minerals and to either trade more with dealers or to sell them via our son's mineral business (MineralMasterpiece.com). He has developed a good clientele that appreciates fine minerals and perhaps they would enjoy them as much as we have.

GS: I would love to go to the Connecticut Valley to collect in the area I grew up in. I would like to go to Namibia also.

TP: *Thank you for the interview, at the end I wish you many great additions to your collection, exciting collecting trips, and many great moments with all your mineral friends.*

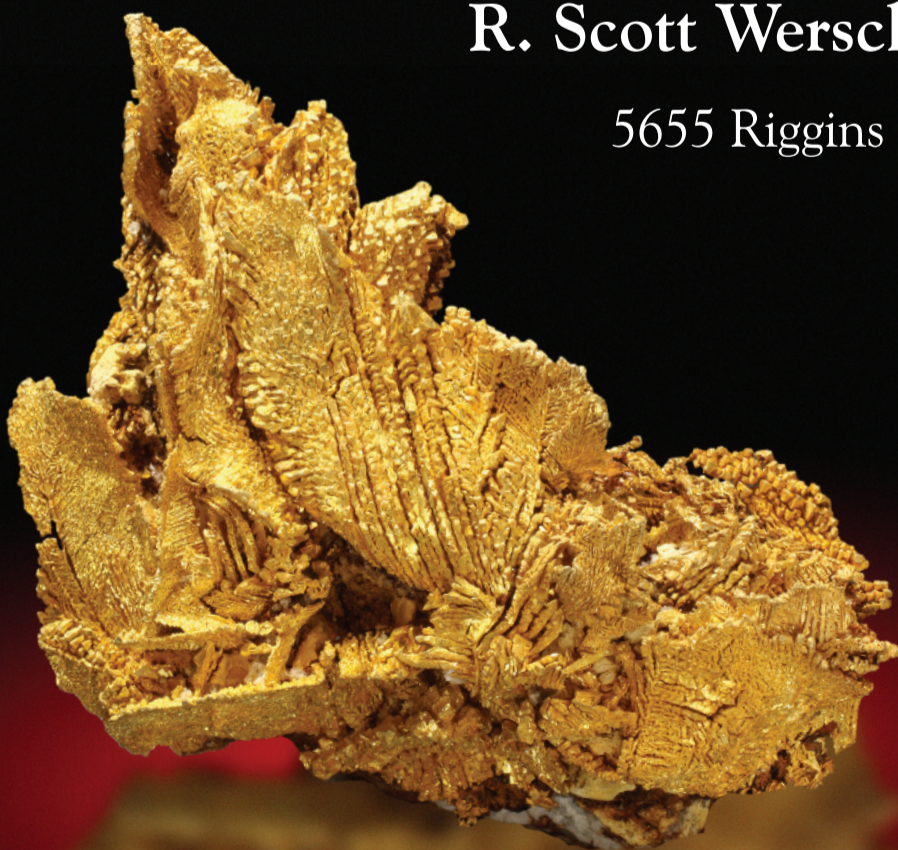
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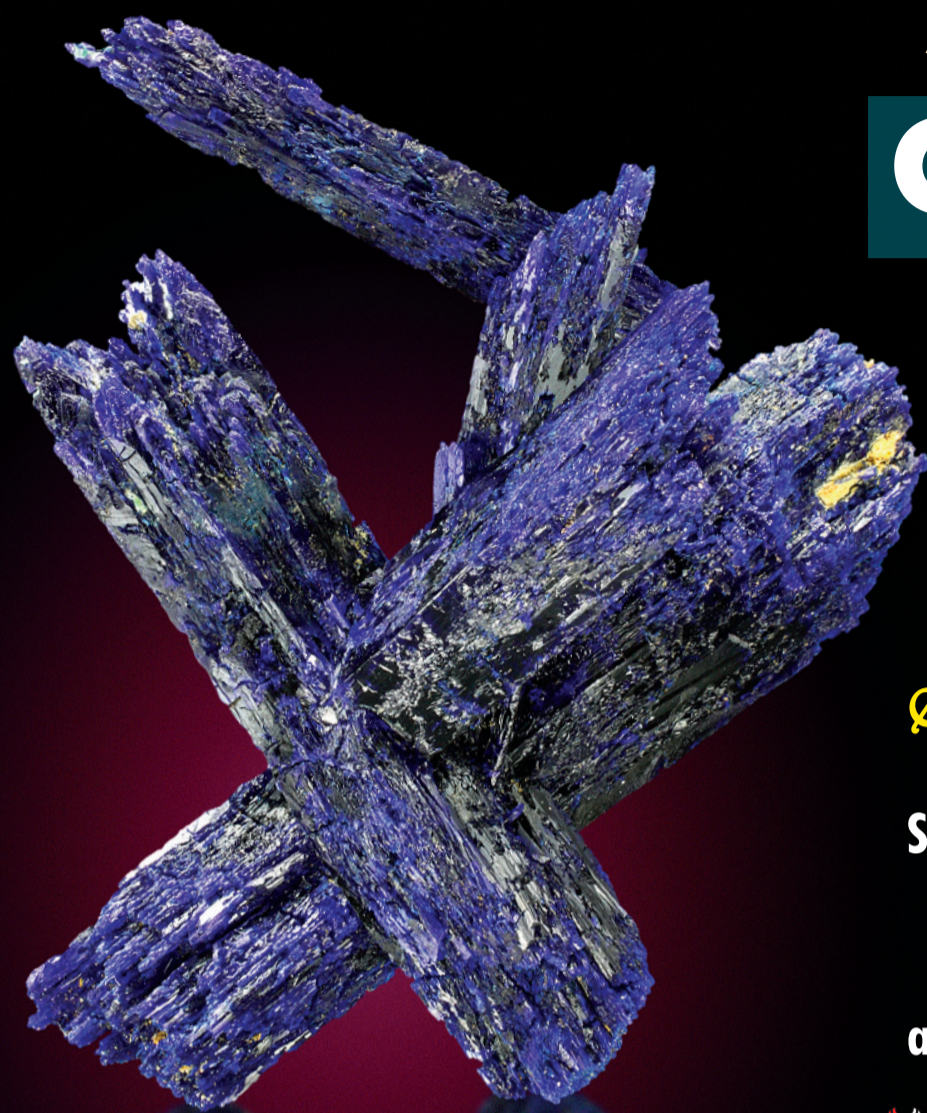
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Crystallized gold from the Round Mountain mine, Nevada, USA. Size 5 cm. Miner's Lunchbox specimen. J. Callen photo.

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Azurite from Kerrouchen, Morocco. Size 3,6 cm.
J. Manchado collection. J. Callen photo.

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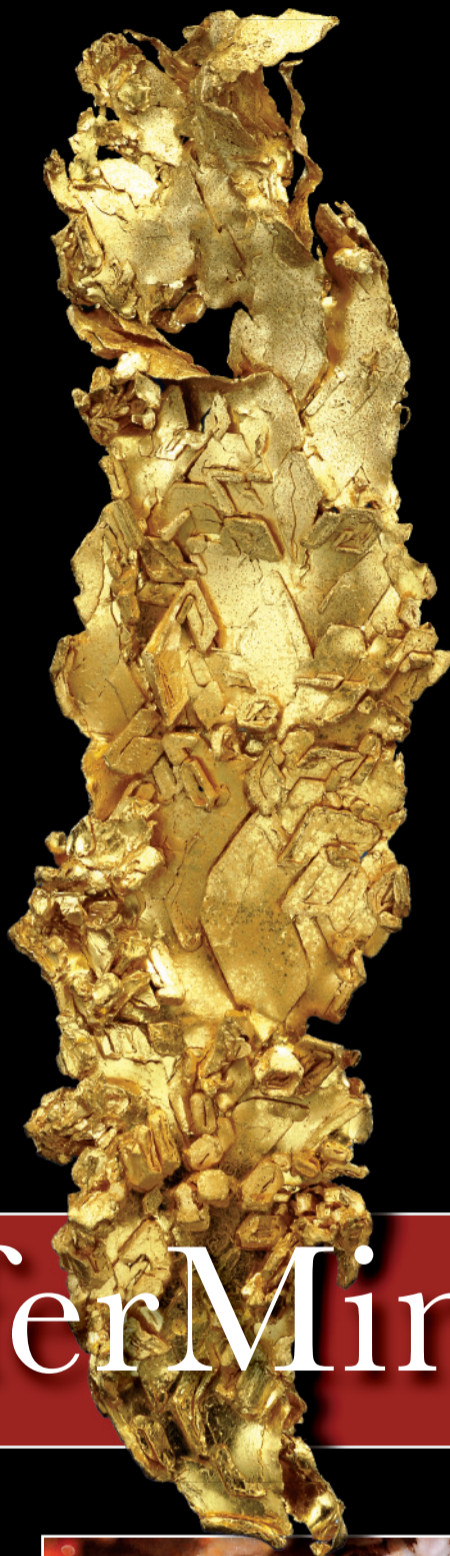
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Erythrite, Bou Azer, Morocco. J. Scovil photo.



Tom (Spirifer Minerals) with self collected specimen in Rogerley, UK.

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Beryls from Volodarsk Volynskii, Ukraine. M. Bienkowska photo.



Vanadinite pocket, Mibladen, Morocco. J. Gajowniczek photo.

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